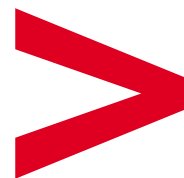


Learning and Skills Council
Increased Flexibility
Case Studies in Improving Practice



Learning+Skills Council

Foreword



Many of you will know that, as Chair of the Young People's Learning Committee, I am committed to ensuring that we share and communicate our effective practices and the ways in which we have found solutions to problems across the Learning and Skills Council. We expect it of the providers that we fund and we need to get better at it ourselves. This publication is a great example of the way in which good practice can be recorded and usefully shared with others.

The Government's vision for the 14-19 phase is exciting. Broadening the curriculum and introducing more vocational opportunities at Key Stage 4 are key components of this. The Increased Flexibility Programme for 14-16 year olds is one of the measures now available to realise that vision. The programme is now in its second year and it has lost none of its momentum. Around 90,000 – of both Year 10 and Year 11 school pupils drawn from over half the secondary schools in the country are now engaged with our providers. These young people are experiencing genuinely vocational learning that is delivered through partnership and collaboration. The programme is proving to be hugely successful, but it has not been without its implementation difficulties. Providers and partners believe in the vision and the programme. In spite of all the potential obstacles that could have minimised participation, they have worked together to find solutions and, in the interest of young learners, made it happen.

This publication describes how partnerships set about implementing really effective practices, overcoming the difficulties encountered during the first year of the programme. I hope that you find it an interesting read and of use in supporting your contribution to improving provision for young people. I commend it to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Banks'. The signature is stylized with large, flowing letters.

Chris Banks
Chair, Young People's Learning Committee

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Executive Summary

January 2004

Subject Increased Flexibility: Case Studies in Improving Practice

This Guide presents 38 case studies of successful practice recorded under the Increased Flexibility Programme for 14-16 year olds. The programme is now in its second year and has seen around 90,000 pupils engage with providers. The case studies fall into six categories, treated as sections, each illustrating a different aspect of the programme:

- Section 1 – Management, Communication and Funding;
- Section 2 – Selection of Students and Delivery Issues;
- Section 3 – Professional and Resource Development;
- Section 4 – External Support, Learner Support and Mentoring;
- Section 5 – Links with Employers; and
- Section 6 – Evaluation.

Each case study draws out specific areas of improving practice and looks ahead to the next steps to indicate how planning shapes the future of the projects. The purpose of the guide is to enable managers and practitioners to use these ideas to inform their own practice in providing for young people.

Status

For information.

Further information

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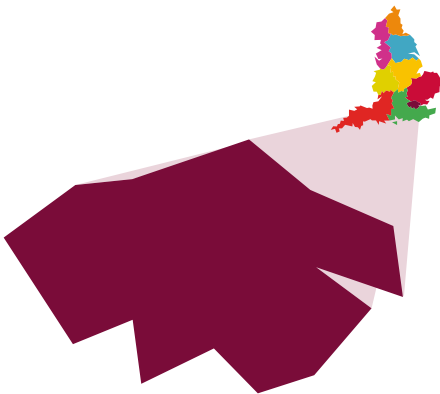
Acknowledgments

In producing this guide, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) National Office and the Centre for Education and Industry at the University of Warwick would like to thank all those who contributed. In particular, thanks go to local LSC coordinators, college and school staff, students, employers, Education Business Link Organisations (EBLO) and Connexions officers, local education authorities (LEAs), the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for their various contributions and advice.



Management, Communication and Funding

1 Islington Protocol



Searchable themes

Classification	General and management
Local LSC	London Central
Partnership	Islington
Region	London
Type of institution	Further education (FE) college
Subject	Various
Qualification	Various
Source	City and Islington College
Theme	Protocols, quality framework, delivery
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

1 With the development of the volume and variety of off-site learning opportunities and take-up by learners, the Islington partnership has developed a quality framework (or protocol) to regulate communications and shared procedures between the partners. The quality framework is having an impact already and provides the basis for the continued task of improving the operation of shared provision.

Background and context

- 2 City and Islington College is formally the lead partner, but it works closely with:
- nine Islington schools: Central Foundation, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School, Highbury Fields, Highbury Grove, Holloway, Islington Arts and Media, Islington Green, Mount Carmel and St Aloysius; and
 - other training providers: Hackney Community College, Springboard Islington, Joshua Galvin and Camden Job Training.

3 Various partnership arrangements between the schools and City and Islington College were set up in autumn 2001 in order to provide off-site programmes for 14-16 year olds in Islington schools. However, during the first year there was no generally agreed standard regarding either quality of provision or the type, volume and timescale of monitoring and reporting that was carried out in partnership institutions. Arrangements tended to be negotiated bilaterally between school and provider; as a result, the standards of practice that were demanded varied and, in some cases, there were gaps in communication and record-keeping.

4

In addition to the Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) schemes, a similar number of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils were taking advantage of other college-based alternative learning programmes which are funded through the European Social Fund (ESF).

5

The overriding purpose of the protocol was to maximise benefits to learners using off-site provision. In particular, to:

- ensure that the home institution supported the learning that they were receiving;
- provide a regular flow of information from the off-site provider – for example, about attendance and progress;
- make things easier, so that institutions were not using a plethora of different paperwork;
- establish both the type and amount of reporting, and agree the reporting cycle;
- ensure that the home institution and provider were complying fully with health and safety and duty of care legislation; and
- provide greater consistency of operation across the variety of institutions, courses and programmes.

What happened?

6

The current coordinator, Nick Hall, was appointed in September 2001. There had been some attempt before to establish a shared protocol, and the requirements of Increased Flexibility and ESF funding gave impetus to do this.

7

In January 2002 a consultant, Mike Prior, was commissioned to produce a protocol for the Islington partnership. The consultant was asked to work to a specification which was supplied by the Islington Increased Flexibility steering group, but which was guided by the quality standards contained in the LSC's IFP handbook.

8

The consultant's work was guided by a small operations group which met monthly with the consultant in attendance. This group was able to review the emerging protocol in the light of developing plans and institutions' activities across the borough.

9

A number of schools and off-site providers received drafts of the protocol and were given the opportunity to respond. However, in practice there was relatively little feedback. The protocol was approved formally by the steering group in July 2002 and was made available to institutions for the first IFP cohort.

10

The protocol defines the roles and responsibilities of the various partners and covers both IFP and ESF programmes. Section A sets out the providers' responsibilities and section B sets out the schools' responsibilities. In addition, there is a section on health and safety, a standard learning agreement and an induction programme for students.

11

Early feedback from schools and providers has led to changes already. For example, the format of the individual learning plan has been modified in order to shift the balance between data-gathering and target-setting activities.

Impact

12

The protocol brought home to schools and providers that each had responsibilities that they had not fully recognised before.

13

Practice has improved: in particular, schools report that getting attendance reports from providers has significantly improved. Schools and colleges agree that selection procedures have become more successful.

14

The protocol made it clear that discipline stayed with the school. Colleges now understand that that Increased Flexibility and ESF-funded students do not fall entirely within their own procedures, and that they have a higher duty of care towards them.

15

However, the protocol has been adopted in a piecemeal way – no one institution has adopted it completely. The protocol has established a benchmark and the partnership is still working to bring all the partners towards this standard. Some providers are located in different local LSCs and are subject to different protocols.

Next steps

16

The partnership has set up a vocational panel which will function as a forum within the LEA to take forward all vocational developments such as the IFP, the quality framework and staff development.

17

A new post of work-related learning manager in Islington is to be created: part of the job will be to encourage and support a more comprehensive use of the quality framework. The postholder will lead on staff development.

18

The Islington partnership is going to run a 14-19 pathfinder scheme which will be linked to the NHS. It is expected that this will lead to an expansion of work-based learning (WBL) opportunities, in which case the protocol may need to be revised and extended.

Learning points

- 'My biggest self criticism – I should have done more on staff development to support implementation – still quite a lot to be done.'
- 'Don't try to produce an ideal document over two years – produce something which is OK and then test and review. Otherwise if you are trying to produce something perfect, that takes too long. You can't consult too widely – but you have to be pragmatic, you can't wait forever.'
- 'Try to work with key players of the various bodies – so that you know they will respond.'
- 'Don't underestimate resource implications of implementation – you need someone with time to make it work. A piece of paper is not enough.'

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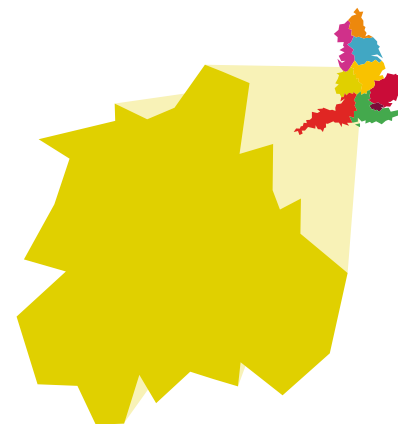
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2 Coventry Collaborative Work to Produce Agreements



Searchable themes

Classification	General and management
Local LSC	Coventry and Warwickshire
Partnership	College, training providers and schools in the Coventry LEA
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	FE colleges, schools, LEA
Subject	Vocational: manufacturing, hairdressing, art and design and motor engineering
Qualification	General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in vocational subjects
Source	Coventry LEA
Theme	Planning and procedures, collaboration, communication, external support
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

19

Individuals and organisations need to communicate and work with each other to overcome teething problems when introducing and embedding new curriculum programmes. With hindsight, some of the problems that were encountered in the IFP in Coventry might have been identified beforehand. But the appointment of Coventry LEA as trouble shooter gave the programme partners an opportunity to tap into a huge bank of experience and expertise.

20

The process skills of the LEA coordinator involved everyone in the project, allowing development of their skills. The end result was a change of direction and the introduction of agreements which gave stability to the students, and relief to some school and college managers with legal responsibilities for the same students. The work identified in this case study was recognised by Ofsted as an example of very good practice.

Background and context

21

A project was established in Coventry, under the IFP banner, targeting the 9 per cent of students that had left city schools without any formal qualifications. All of the secondary schools (20, plus schools for those with additional learning needs) were involved, with each school sending two students on the 'fresh start' programme. Under the scheme, the students attend college one day a week to study alternative vocational subjects such as engineering, catering, hairdressing and art and design. The project involved private training providers as well as FE colleges.

22

All students went through an induction which covered important aspects such as working in teams, new ways of working, health and safety, and so on. But there were initial teething problems, in particular, the exposure of the students (and tutors or teachers) to different working arrangements, procedures, organisation cultures and learning styles. In one college, a drug-related incident brought matters to a head: the students involved (and some who were not involved) were asked to leave. Coventry LEA received funding from the lead colleges to coordinate the programme. They accepted that it was their role to do something about the problems, in collaboration with the IFP partners.

What happened?**23**

During a meeting of all the partners, it was recognised that the same procedures needed to be installed to cover all courses and institutions, although it was agreed that there needed to be some flexibility in order to allow local negotiations to take place. Such an agreement should be negotiated with the students themselves, if possible. In addition, there was agreement that it was important for everyone to 'sing from the same hymn sheet' at all times, about some aspects of the programme. This applied in particular to the guidance and procedures drawn up by the LEA (after consultation) on drug incidents and managing student behaviour.

24

A service level agreement was designed to be used by schools, colleges and training providers. At first, it was based on one that was used by a local Coventry company, Arthur Rank Co. Ltd. The agreement sets out in some detail the structure of the partnership, agreements on curriculum provision, recruitment arrangements, staff roles and responsibilities. Colleges and training providers can amend the agreement to suit their own purposes, but not if those changes affect legal implications. In its review of the IFP in Coventry, Ofsted stated that the agreement was 'a good model for partnership'.

Impact**25**

There was an immediate impact. Students were aware of the 'ground rules' and what would happen if they were broken. Likewise, the colleges and training providers welcomed the formal contracts and guidance on what to do. The schools are responsible for pre-16 students and know that the legalities are being covered, that these aspects are being addressed properly. To reinforce this understanding, the LEA ran training sessions dealing with the legal implications of being responsible for pre-16 students.

26

Relationships between the different groups improved, and many of the students did well. The target of reducing the number of students who left without formal qualifications was achieved, with the original figure of 9 per cent halved to 4.5 per cent. This success has led to further improvements.

Next steps**27**

The provision of 14-19 education and training will be enhanced by introducing a broad range of new GCSEs in vocational subjects. Also, provision of vocational A-levels and general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) will be enhanced, with student apprenticeships developed at this level, ensuring an increased range of pathways for young people. The pathfinder scheme will develop a citywide common timetable for pre-16 courses, enabling students to access provision in other schools and colleges. The Coventry Learning Net will make high-quality teaching materials available online to teachers.

28

Work is anticipated to produce similar agreements for teaching and learning styles, in order to establish a focus on active learning. Parents were not involved in this early work, but it is hoped that this will be rectified in the future.

Learning points

- 'Students should be involved in the negotiation of courses processes from the beginning.'
- 'Communication is very important – make sure that guidance is clearly set down in writing.'
- 'Check understanding and agreement at regular intervals.'
- 'Ensure that students are in the right environment for them – some based within an FE college may be better served by being with a training provider, and vice-versa.'
- 'Colleges are not used to writing student reports – make help and support available.'
- 'Colleges have to change some of the ways in which they manage – for example, where they are no longer able to cancel a class, should a tutor be absent.'

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3 Hertfordshire Working Collaboratively to Cope with Success



Searchable themes

Classification	General and management
Local LSC	Hertfordshire
Lead partner	Not applicable
Region	East of England
Type of institution	Schools, FE colleges
Subject	All
Qualification	Pre-entry, Levels 1 and 2
Source	Hertfordshire LEA
Theme	Planning, networking, information, collaboration, capacity problems
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

29
Setting up structures and communication channels to encourage networking and working collaboratively can be an effective means of sharing and overcoming common problems. It also provides a forum to identify potential problems, and to share and capitalise on the good practice that has been developed already.

Background and context

30
The IFP was set up in Hertfordshire in September 2002. The beginning of the programme was designed to coincide with the implementation of eight new GCSEs in vocational subjects. There are four IFP partnerships in Hertfordshire, each of which is coordinated by one of the four FE colleges. The partnerships have a local steering group with representatives from the college, school and training providers. The day-to-day management of the vocational programmes is the responsibility of the colleges' Key Stage 4 flexibility curriculum managers, each of whom is working with up to 20 schools in their partnership.

What happened?

31
As a result of the IFP partnerships, approximately 700 Year 10 pupils from across the county undertook vocational courses at their local college. This number is in addition to some 400 Year 11 students who are already following college programmes. The range of courses offered included: construction, catering, health and beauty, retail, electrical installation, land studies, horticulture and administration. All the courses led to recognised qualifications, including national vocational qualifications (NVQs), the new GCSEs, Key Skills or other related vocational qualifications. In September 2003, another new cohort of Year 10 pupils gained access to IFP.

32

The success of the programme increased demand and led to difficulties regarding capacity. Firstly, to find a solution, this had to be seen as a countywide problem and not simply one for the individual partnerships to tackle. Working collaboratively at county level was seen as critical to reaching a successful outcome to the problem.

33

As a consequence, a number of key groups were set up. The first to be established was a Hertfordshire IFP partnership management group, which is facilitated by the LSC and the LEA, and supported by Hertfordshire Careers Service and Hertfordshire education-to-business (e2b) – the county's e2b links consortium. The function of the group is to determine the overall strategy and direction of the individual partnerships. It deals with issues such as access, capacity, staff training, progression, qualifications and accreditation.

34

Another group focused on collaborative working with the 14-19 age range. Senior staff from 25 schools and the four FE colleges worked together in order to devise strategies and find solutions to the challenges facing the development of collaborative working, for example: common timetabling, curriculum models, progression routes and learner entitlement.

35

A vocational learning network was set up, which is a support group open to all staff involved in IFP or vocational learning in Hertfordshire. This network provided guidance and training on teaching and learning issues, good practice, curriculum updating and management issues.

Impact**36**

The underlying principle of this scheme is the freedom of young people to move across the county to access the partnership or programme that meets their needs. The key groups worked together effectively on a number of related issues in order to help support this kind of flexibility at ground level. These key group activities have helped to encourage a culture of collaboration, rather than competition.

Next steps**37**

The current challenge for the Hertfordshire partnership is to develop an overarching and integrated strategy for 14-19 partnership working. The participants recognise that IFP has increased knowledge and understanding of collaborative working. It is now ready to move into new areas of partnership development.

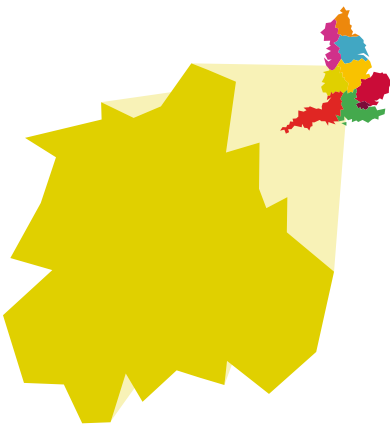
Learning points

- 'Often, successful IFP programmes have contained management and planning groups with representatives from both pre-16 and post-16 institutions.'
- 'Working collaboratively increases the level of expertise that is available, as well as the chances of success in overcoming problems.'
- 'More flexibility in matching learners to institutions in order to meet their learning needs may help to ease the problem of capacity.'
- 'Good networking can help to disseminate good practice and important information quickly.'
- 'Projects need all partners to meet, discuss and be involved with the formulation of strategy and procedures.'
- 'It is more likely that a problem shared will become a problem solved.'

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4 Warwickshire Education Authority Long-term Strategy for Young People Aged 14-19



Searchable themes

Classification	Management and organisation
Local LSC	Coventry and Warwickshire
Lead partner	Warwickshire LEA
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	All
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	Warwickshire LEA
Theme	Planning, collaboration, strategy, 14-19 policy
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

38

A structured, well-resourced framework is essential when working with a large number of disparate organisations in order to deliver long-term educational objectives. LEAs are likely to have such structures and support staff with the expertise and experience to support and promote developments. In Warwickshire, a 14-19 countywide strategy that began in the 1990s has been adapted to support new IFP initiatives. Warwickshire LEA is a key player in curriculum development in the county's schools, and helps to ensure progression and coherence in the programmes that are on offer. It helps to plan and deliver on a long-term basis.

Background and context

39

Following an Ofsted inspection, in 1993 Warwickshire LEA set out a tertiary policy to raise achievement and improve progression, especially in the areas of the county where the progression rate at the age of 16 was lower than the county average. The main objective was to work collaboratively in order to provide greater opportunities for students to achieve and progress. Four main principles guided Warwickshire LEA's strategy:

- young people are entitled to access a wide range of vocational and academic courses with different methods of teaching, learning and assessment, meeting the needs of individual learners;
- no one institution is able to meet the needs of all learners, and Increased Flexibility can be delivered in collaboration with different partners;
- to avoid fragmentation of the system, diversity in secondary provision has to be managed coherently; and
- young people are entitled to impartial and timely advice and guidance before, during and on leaving the 14-19 phase.

What happened?**40**

In the last 10 years, the main areas of focus for Warwickshire LEA have been raising achievement and progression. The main areas of activity have been in the pre-16 and post-16 age groups. Warwickshire LEA has been successful in bids for funding from the Government and ESF. During that time, considerable expertise and experience has been accumulated in managing and delivering projects that require partnership collaboration to provide choice and progression for students.

41

Warwickshire LEA has been a lead partner in projects that promote Key Skills, including wider Key Skills, mentoring, action research bids to develop employability skills through the curriculum and, recently, student apprenticeships. Its strategy was supported by the operation of area panels for those aged 11-19 and the involvement of all schools, FE and training providers. Also, through the Education-Business Partnership (EBP), Warwickshire LEA has developed links with employers who are very supportive of the new courses, especially those leading to accreditation.

42

The student apprenticeship programme supported by Warwickshire LEA began in September 2003. Students applied through their school for a placement with a training provider and followed courses leading to foundation, intermediate or advanced level.

Impact**43**

Support from an LEA can take many forms. In Warwickshire, participants see its contribution as including:

- provision of a structure and framework – something to subscribe to that is tangible;
- a display of commitment as an organisation;
- good communication channels – the ability to keep everyone informed;
- provision of funding – the ability to audit, monitor and source finance;
- the ability to take on the roles of adviser or consultant, critical friend and honest broker;

- a reminder to schools of their responsibilities;
- giving feedback to participants;
- problem solving;
- monitoring – baseline data collection, qualifications, progression and destinations;
- good public relations and celebration of achievement;
- funding work experience – health and safety checks; and
- staff development.

Next steps**44**

Warwickshire LEA intends to increase the number of training providers with which it works in partnership, and organise regular 'taster day' events for Year 9 pupils. In addition, it has plans to introduce an 'Investment in Young People' award, in order to encourage more employers to get involved in the delivery of work-related learning.

Learning points

- 'To sustain partnerships, there is a need to understand how other individuals and organisations operate.'
- 'The needs of students are paramount.'
- 'Funding is readily available, but you have to work hard to find and access it.'
- 'Employers can be very generous.'
- 'Selection (by interview) is important – make sure the programme gets the "right pupil".'
- 'Partnership and working collaboratively are the keys to success.'

Contact

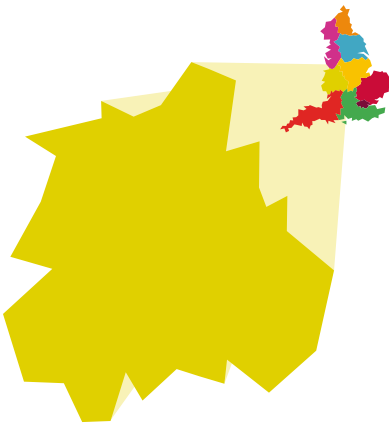
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5 Warwickshire The Role of the School Coordinator



Searchable themes

Classification	Planning and procedures
Local LSC	Coventry and Warwickshire
Lead partner	Not applicable
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	School
Subject	All
Qualification	GNVQ, GCSE
Source	Warwickshire LEA
Theme	School coordination
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

45

IFP involves a number of activities that require good planning, preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In turn, these require a range of skills to fulfil. Schools may need to carry out a range of tasks to arrange an IFP placement:

- interviewing pupils and parents prior to placement;
- finding and briefing mentors;
- giving out log books;
- arranging career interviews;
- undertaking NVQ assessments;
- finding and organising work placements; and
- arranging pupil insurance.

46

Many schools and colleges appoint coordinators with good interpersonal and organisational skills, as well as the ability to manage change.

Background and context

47

Warwickshire LEA has been planning and managing IFPs since 1998. The first DfES-funded action research project took place in the north of the county, in Bedworth, Nuneaton and Rugby. In 2002/03, 36 out of 50 schools, 6 FE colleges, 10 training providers and over 200 employers worked in four area consortiums to deliver 73 programmes to 1,200 Key Stage 4 pupils on Wednesday and Friday afternoons.

48

Warwickshire LEA has invested significantly in a structure to support and manage developments under an education officer who is responsible for 14-19 policy. The education officer is helped by a 14-19 development officer responsible for Key Stage 4 collaborative provision. Each of the four area consortiums has its own management and/or advisory board, and the development officer sets up and attends all area meetings.

49

The development manager has identified the need for each school to have someone to carry out the role of IFP coordinator. Whether or not they are given the title depends on other factors; for example, they may have other job titles. The role may be a shared one between one or more staff, or taken on by a member of the senior management team.

50

In addition, Warwickshire LEA has identified tasks that require help from other partners.

What happened?

51

Warwickshire LEA guidance for schools identified the following tasks for coordinators:

With students:

- interview;
- gain their commitment;
- identify vocational areas;
- collect data;
- complete inductions;
- organise work placement and visits;
- organise log books; and
- hold regular meetings and reviews.

With parents:

- interview;
- gain their commitment;
- stimulate their interest;
- encourage their attendance at careers meetings;
- keep in close contact; and
- complete log books.

With staff or tutors:

- brief staff;
- liaise regularly with head of year and form tutors;
- acknowledge improvement or achievement in log books; and
- agree target-setting via a record of achievement or progress file.

With employers/training providers:

- find placements;
- discuss student needs and the log book;
- explain the 'buddy' relationship;
- maintain close contact; and
- support the induction programme and NVQ assessment.

With the careers officer or personal adviser:

- arrange careers interview;
- explain the log book;
- discuss career goals or targets; and
- encourage attendance at steering group meetings.

Issues that school coordinators need to be aware of include:

- preparing a list of approved qualifications (section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000);
- timetable constraints;
- funding arrangements;
- senior management support;
- clear and detailed planning;
- early involvement of key players and quality partners;
- consortium arrangements;
- student selection arrangements (Year 9 options)
- whole staff awareness – publicity and communication; and
- realistic targets and timescales.

Impact

52

The involvement of a coordinator has meant that, over time, expertise is developed in order to recognise the type of student who is most likely to succeed on IFP, and therefore who should be involved in the selection process.

53

The lead officer for Warwickshire LEA receives regular feedback from termly review meetings on how the IFP is progressing, including recommendations as to how it can be improved.

Next steps

54

Working collaboratively to develop and improve the programme is considered to be very important.

Learning points

- 'IFP needs to be managed and coordinated effectively in order to support and enrich the curriculum, and to contribute to pupil development and learning.'
- 'Schools should appoint a member of the senior management team to be responsible for the delivery of IFP.'
- 'Schools should support the role of the school IFP coordinator – for example, by allowing the time to carry out duties, attend meetings and receive staff development training.'
- 'The IFP coordinator can successfully prepare students by:
 - 1 making sure that the programme meets the needs of all students;
 - 2 working with other staff to plan and deliver the programme;
 - 3 explaining what is happening to staff who are not involved in delivering the programme;
 - 4 explaining the aims and objectives to students and parents;
 - 5 providing feedback on students' progress to all who are involved in the programme; and
 - 6 agreeing measures of success in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's programme.'

Contact

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6 Hampshire and the South-East A Regional Approach



Searchable themes

Classification	General and management
Local LSC	Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth
Lead partner	Not applicable
Region	South-East
Type of institution	LSC, LEA, government office, regional development agency
Subject	Not applicable
Qualification	Not applicable
Source	LSC Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth
Theme	Communication, strategy, skills strategy
Urban/rural/mixed	Not applicable

Area of good practice

55

LSC Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth has worked with other local LSCs and with regional agencies – the Government Office South-East, the South East Economic Development Agency (SEEDA) and Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) South-East region – in order to draw upon experiences, expertise and resources across the region. Developments across the region are being shared, helping to increase momentum, link up separate initiatives and develop shared expectations about the pace and quality of further development.

Background and context

56

The South-East is a relatively prosperous region with a high overall level of growth and low overall level of unemployment. However, this rosy regional picture masks concerns about pockets of deprivation and high unemployment in parts of Kent and on the south coast; also about the concentration of employment growth in the north and west of the region and in a limited number of service sectors, which is creating 'overheating' and sector decline.

57

The South-East is served by six local LSCs and 19 LEAs. LSC Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth contains four LEAs which cover 123 secondary schools and 22 colleges. There are 12 IFP partnerships.

What happened?

58

The LSDA organises regular regional updates as part of the Increased Flexibility Support Programme. Discussions around that event between the LSDA and a number of local LSCs led to the establishment of a bi-monthly seminar which includes representatives from all six local LSCs and from the LSDA network. These seminars have helped local LSC coordinators to:

- explore and develop their responsibilities – in particular, their brief to evaluate Increased Flexibility developments;

- explore differences in provision and funding between different areas – for example, LSC Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth has been able to match and fund all dedicated provision for the IFP;
- relate the IFP to the emergence of 14-19 pathfinders and 14-19 strategies generally, including employer engagement and innovative regional education-to-business link activities;
- access the LSDA network to learn about LSDA support and other good practice; and
- relate developments in vocational learning to the skills needs and economic priorities of the region as set out in the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA).

59

In association with this seminar, three further regional initiatives have developed:

- data collection for the IFP has been carried out regionally – this has proved to be a practical and economic way of administering this task and has helped to put issues of evaluation, progression and impact onto the regional agenda;
- close links have been made with the South-East Regional Strategy Group for vocational and work-related learning, which is convened by the Government Office South East (GOSE) – with development funding from the DfES, this group (which is made up from a wide range of stakeholders: LEAs, local LSCs, Connexions, Association of South East Colleges, SEC, SEEDA and LSDA) has commissioned a directory of teaching and learning resources in support of GCSEs in vocational subjects; and
- the GOSE has commissioned an independent report to map existing and emerging vocational provision for under-16s across the South-East, with local LSCs providing regional IFP data – this helped all the stakeholders to understand the extent of provision and to take on board some of the constraints and tensions affecting this development.

Impact

60

Existing regional coordination has produced tangible benefits – particularly in terms of the management of data collection and production of the GCSE resource directory. The seminars are regarded as valuable by stakeholders.

Next steps

61

There are plans to increase employer engagement by getting their involvement in the production of new resources. LEA 14-19 advisers are being invited to join the emerging regional network in order to 'join up' developments.

Learning points

- 'Increased Flexibility is an agenda which can mobilise interest and encourage coordination at a regional level.'
- 'There is an emerging agenda which concerns the need to relate regional economic planning to the development of vocational programmes. This agenda is being addressed where stakeholders from different regional and sub-regional agencies are meeting regularly.'
- 'There are opportunities to provide some services and resources regionally, which is likely to be cost-effective.'

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7 Suffolk Marketing the Increased Flexibility Programme



Searchable themes

Classification	Communication
Local LSC	Suffolk
Partnership	Not applicable
Region	East of England
Type of institution	Not applicable
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	LSC Suffolk
Theme	Celebration of success
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

62

This case study is an example of how, by means of a leaflet and an event, a local LSC working with the local government office and colleges can celebrate success within the IFP and communicate a variety of positive messages about Increased Flexibility to participants and non-participating employers, schools and colleges.

Background and context

63

LSC Suffolk and the Government Office East of England wanted to promote and communicate the achievements of the IFP in a way

that raised the profile of the programme generally, particularly with employers and non-participating schools.

64

A number of colleges had produced prospectuses in order to market the particular qualifications that they were offering within the IFP. Suffolk College volunteered to host an open day as an opportunity to provide a countywide platform for the achievements of the first year of Increased Flexibility. Tutors and students from Suffolk College and Otley College (a joint IFP partnership) participated, together with stands and staff from the other two IFP partnerships in Suffolk (Lowestoft College and West Suffolk College).

What happened?

65

Partnerships for Success: a more general leaflet was intended to build upon what had already been achieved and focus on the particular challenge of communicating the values and opportunities of Increased Flexibility to Year 9 pupils. The leaflet was produced professionally and was targeted at Year 9 students and their parents. It gave a brief explanation of the IFP and how it operates in Suffolk, but most of its content was filled by eight case studies of successful IFP students describing and validating various IFPs. As such, it offered added value to schools and careers advisers who were looking to explain and market new opportunities.

66

The leaflet has now been distributed to schools and was used to inform choices for the second cohort; it has been supplemented by the distribution of bookmarks and pens.

67

The Suffolk Showcase: the showcase was a college open day which provided students on programmes at two of the colleges with the opportunity to show their learning, skills and products to their parents, teachers, invited business leaders, training providers, Connexions staff, students and teachers from other schools and college staff who were not involved in the IFP. The event was extremely popular and created a 'feelgood' effect for learners and visitors. LSC Suffolk's magazine, The Learning Curve, reported on the open day.

Impact

68

Approximately 150 people attended (not including students and tutors), and approximately 1,000 leaflets were distributed. The leaflet was complementary to other marketing materials produced by the colleges. The Suffolk Showcase was well attended and much enjoyed, and helped to raise the profile of the IFP within Suffolk College.

Next steps

69

Suffolk College is planning to repeat the showcase event next year, and the two other lead partner colleges are planning to run their own. As a result, these showcase events can have a more localised impact.

Learning points

- 'Using a consultant ensured provision of a high-quality product that related to local experiences.'
- 'A common leaflet can be shared across the county.'
- 'The leaflet fitted well with the contribution that the local government office wants to make.'
- 'The Suffolk Showcase met the desire that students had to celebrate the special nature of their Increased Flexibility experiences.'
- 'The success of Increased Flexibility students may be able to create a more positive response towards vocational programmes and their providers.'

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8 Humberside Increased Flexibility Presentations by the Local Learning and Skills Council



Searchable themes

Classification	Information
Local LSC	Humberside
Partnership	IFP partners
Region	Yorkshire and Humberside
Type of institution	LSC
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	Youth transition adviser, LSC Humberside
Theme	Information, communication
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

70

A series of presentations and workshops were organised by a local LSC to raise the awareness of IFP amongst careers coordinators, schools and other professionals. Good information, which is well presented in various forms, is important in preparing people for new innovations that can bring about changes in their working lives.

Background and context

71

Within the LSC Humberside region there are four partnerships covering the four local authority areas. The LSC has responsibility for IFP funding, monitoring, evaluation arrangements and facilitating effective and supportive relationships with partners. The Increased Flexibility partnerships were established in September 2003.

72

The LSC's youth transition adviser took the lead in developing IFP locally, and quickly recognised the need to raise awareness and keep people informed of developments which may affect their work, both within the local LSC and with external partners and agencies.

What happened?

73

Discussions with local partners identified the need for more information on the implications of the Green Paper and its vision for the future reform of the 14-19 phase. Understanding of this would have a knock-on effect with regards to the way in which young people would learn about IFP.

74

The youth transition adviser targeted the Connexions Service and other guidance agencies. A workshop programme commenced in June 2002, with one workshop being run in each local authority area. These were attended by a wide range of delegates: Connexions Service personnel, personal advisers (both generic and careers), education and training officers and school staff. In addition, sessions were undertaken with members of the Hull management committee, education and training sub-group and other localised learning forums.

75

The workshop objectives were to:

- enable participants to demonstrate an understanding of the new framework for Increased Flexibility post-14;
- help staff to be aware of the needs and aspirations of pupils, and to give appropriate advice where possible; and
- raise awareness of local programme activities and IFP generally.

76

At first, there was very little information available on IFP and the new GCSEs in vocational subjects, and handouts had to be self-prepared. These were refined over time and added to gradually from outside resources, such as the DfES-produced GCSE awareness-raising leaflets.

Impact

77

Delegate responses were generally positive, although the workshops did perform a service by revealing some concerns with regard to particular changes, such as the shift to 'statutory entitlement/access to subjects', as opposed to 'compulsory' curriculum subjects.

78

Following the introduction of IFP, the partnerships have provided more detailed and specific curriculum information within their regions to key partners; this in turn should provide more appropriate advice to young people in order to help them make informed choices.

79

The IFP has been successful in its first year of running in Humberside. In one partnership area, 34 schools and over 2,000 students participated in the programme, and it is anticipated that this will grow.

Next steps

80

The education-to-business link organisation has been commissioned to develop awareness and work-related learning opportunities further for 14-16 year olds. The aim is to ensure that all young people who are engaged in IFP have access to identified 'curriculum' and work-related learning activities.

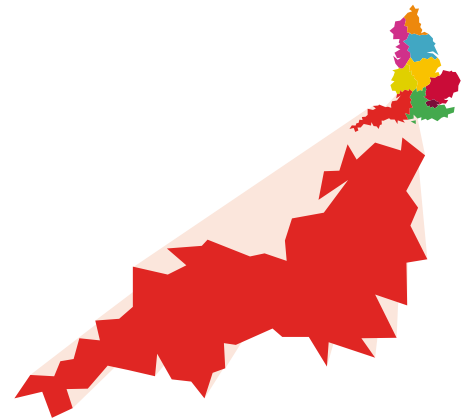
Learning points

- 'Be sure to share information with all the partners.'
- 'Check that the partners have a common understanding of what is going to happen.'
- 'Refine materials over time (ask for feedback to do this).'
- 'Prepare different materials for different audiences – a presentation to parents should not necessarily be the same as one that is given to senior managers in schools and colleges.'

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9 West of England The Language of Increased Flexibility



Searchable themes

Classification	Communication
Local LSC	West of England
Lead partner	Weston College
Region	South-West
Type of institution	FE college, schools
Subject	Not applicable
Qualification	Not applicable
Source	Weston College
Theme	Guidance, jargon, language
Urban/rural/mixed	Not applicable

Area of good practice

81

Weston College discovered that terms which were being used in common documents had different meanings for different partners. Action was taken to consult with partners and to redraft with the specific intention of avoiding ambiguity; where necessary, new terms were coined.

Background and context

82

LSC West of England produced a good practice guide on work-related learning and Increased Flexibility for colleges and schools. However, the use of common IFP terminology to describe IFP placements as 'work placements', and the members of staff who coordinate these placements as 'work placement officers', led to confusion: uninitiated readers understood the term to mean conventional work placements, as opposed to IFP placements.

What happened?

83

Representatives from all types of institution – schools, colleges, LSC and training providers – were given the opportunity to share in the writing of new guidance on extended work experience. Consultation took place in the Bristol area in order to identify misunderstandings, and a number of new terms were coined. School students studying at college through the IFP were described as taking up 'college placements', while the staff coordinating these placements were described as 'lead professionals'.

Impact

84
The consultation process indicated that the new document was clearer than its predecessor.

Next steps

85
In general, a heightened awareness of issues of communication and jargon will inform future document production. Other contentious or equivocal terms can be tackled one-by-one.

Learning points

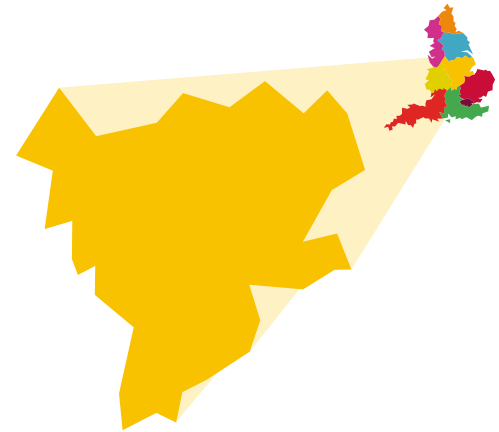
- 'Some IFP language is aspirational, in that it describes a role or activity in terms implying that an objective is being achieved – for example, “work placement” or “IFP”.'
- 'IFP enthusiasts and insiders need to be aware that many people (including key partners) will not have learned these terms, and that they may be sceptical about the extent to which the intended aspiration has been achieved – in either case, confusion could result.'
- 'New terminology may be necessary to support new joint activities. However, these coinages are more likely to be successful if they are flexible and open to negotiation.'

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10 Northampton Pathway Partnerships



Searchable themes

Classification	General and management
Local LSC	Northamptonshire
Partnership	Moulton College and Northampton College with Trinity Upper School, Northampton, Guilsborough School, Wrenn School, Wellingborough, Kingsthorpe Community College, Roade School, Moulton School, Sponne School
Region	East Midlands
Type of institution	Specialist FE college and general FE College
Subject	Applied science, art and design, leisure and tourism, information and communication technology (ICT), engineering, construction and health and social care
Qualification	Applied GCSE, City and Guilds progression award, applying Engineering Principles 1
Source	Moulton College and Northampton College
Theme	Collaboration, delivery, clusters
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

86

A collaboration with more than one college and a range of rural and town schools has enabled this partnership to move away from a provider/client model to a more varied and flexible set of subject clusters (or pathway partnerships) that are coordinated by a lead partner.

87

The delegation of responsibilities and budgets to pathway partnerships, and clear leadership within these partnerships, has fostered engagement and diversity. Leadership of the pathway partnerships (and of the partnership as a whole) has shifted between institutions according to capacity and circumstances. All of the pathways offer complementary qualifications alongside applied GCSEs. Additional resources have been received to pay for transport and to support curriculum development and cluster work. The whole partnership is now working together with two other local Increased Flexibility partnerships in order to share good practice, development work and some resources.

Background and context

88

Moulton College and Northampton College both have a long history of collaboration in Northamptonshire. Partnership activity is built on the common practice of the two organisations to offer

complementary curriculums, mostly for young people in the central Northampton area. Northampton College is a general FE college for the central Northamptonshire area, and Moulton College is a regional centre of excellence for education and training for the land-based, construction and furniture industries.

89

Both colleges are active members of the Northamptonshire learning partnership and already work closely with University College Northampton on a number of higher education (HE) initiatives and developments.

90

Both colleges have long-established links with some local schools. However, the majority of work that they have done previously has been targeted within two areas:

- the provision of vocational programmes – these are for students who have become disaffected and/or are underachieving in Key Stage 4, and who require a more practical teaching and learning opportunity for part (or in some cases, all) of their 14-16 programme; and
- a tertiary cluster arrangement – mostly based in the north of Northampton, this provides a wider range of subject options for post-16 students in schools in the area.

What happened?**91**

Moulton College and Northampton College collaborated on a joint bid to the LSC for the IFP in December 2001 to run cohort 1 from September 2002. At the time, 12 schools expressed an interest in participating.

92

It was intended from the outset that the Increased Flexibility partnership would be an opportunity to transform the conventional provider/client relationship between colleges and schools. At the time, the bid leader, Len Cloth, saw the Increased Flexibility partnership as an opportunity to enable schools to play an enlarged role in leading and delivering vocational courses.

93

The bid was approved in March 2002. At that time, curriculum deputies and vocational coordinators from the interested schools convened for a development meeting, where the following proposals were made:

- Moulton College was to provide the project coordinator and manage the funding for the project;
- five pathways were to be offered from September 2002 – each based on an applied GCSE, together with an additional vocational qualification at Level 1;
- pathway partnerships were to be set up, in order to plan, develop and implement each pathway – each partnership was to consist of one of the colleges and one or more of the schools, and would be managed by a lead partner (either a school or college), containing one lead person to coordinate planning, development, budget and implementation within each cluster; and
- to set up a steering group – consisting of the project coordinator (chair), lead persons from each pathway partnership, a local LSC, LEA and an employers' representative.

94

It was expected that each pathway would adopt one of a pre-defined set of alternative delivery models. However, delegation of responsibility meant that partners were free to design their own model, one which best suited the needs of their students, experience, staffing, resources, location and the nature of their subject. This led to a variety of collaboration in delivery:

- students alternating between school and college once a week, or once a fortnight;
- college lecturers teaching in schools; and
- school teacher assessing in colleges where the college is a recognised assessment centre, but the school is not.

Moreover, these arrangements are flexible and as staff and resources change, or new qualifications are added to the programme, changes in delivery arrangements have been made.

95

The funding is managed by the project coordinator at Moulton College. Each pathway partnership has a delegated budget that is managed by the lead partner on behalf of the partnership members. Each pathway leader is rewarded for its role by receiving an additional 10 per cent funding in recognition of the responsibilities that have been assumed. The costs of making this provision are recovered by reimbursement of invoices for teaching and learning resources, transport and administration and on a termly basis in arrears by invoice for delivery costs. Only the construction and information technology (IT) pathway partnerships are led by the two colleges; the other five are led by schools.

96

Moulton College has been successful now in three bids to the LSDA for funding from the local network development funds that are allocated from the Increased Flexibility support programme. This funding has paid for cover and travelling costs for the steering group and for the separate pathway partnership meetings. The funding is managed by Moulton College and claimed by partnership members usually through the lead partners.

97

In addition, in January 2003 the project held a joint conference with the LEA to bring together the three different partnerships in the county and share good practice. The outcomes of this conference were as follows:

- development of a countywide network for Increased Flexibility – this planned a series of subject workshops for delivery staff, supported by LSDA, for the autumn term 2003. Non-member staff would be able to attend for a nominal fee in order to widen participation; and
- development of additional pathway partnerships for cohort 2 in construction and health and social care, beginning in September 2003.

98

Other developments included the issue of transportation costs – these quickly put pressure on budgeting allocations. The colleges successfully sought additional funds from the local LSC in order to meet these costs. Further involvement by employers is being pursued.

Impact

99

All pathways partnerships have operated effectively and within the set budgetary arrangements in 2002/03, with 159 students recruited to the pathways that were offered.

100

Recruitment has exceeded the target in Year 1, and is expected to expand further into Year 2.

101

Initial responses have indicated that students' motivation has been enhanced by the more practical and vocational nature of the pathway provision and that, as a result, improvements in their engagement are being seen in other areas of Key Stage 4 studies.

102

Students' initial achievement, particularly in the vocational qualifications, has been higher than expected.

Next steps

103

In order to build on good practice within individual schools and colleges, development now needs to focus on delivery teams in order to enable them to share good practice and jointly develop teaching and learning resources.

104

Service level agreements will be developed within each pathway partnership, in order to ensure that partner responsibilities are specified and understood clearly.

105

Transport costs need to be budgeted separately from delivery costs because they are not comparable from partnership to partnership, or from subject to subject – this is due to differences in the requirement and availability of specialist resources.

106

The collaborative and open approach adopted by the partnerships in this work has resulted in increased demand and widened participation of schools. However, growth will need to be managed carefully, since the colleges are already experiencing capacity constraints arising from the development of this new work.

Learning points

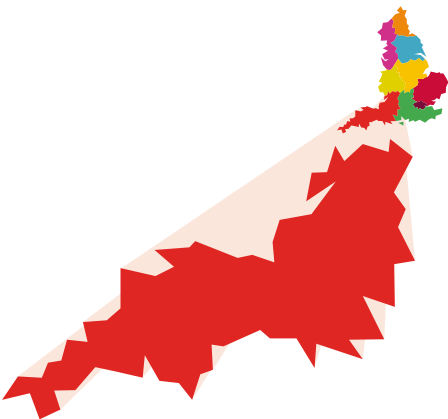
- 'The involvement of two colleges may have helped to create a culture where power and responsibility are less centralised.'
- 'More delegation has resulted in strong engagement of teachers and students and also a great variety of collaboration.'
- 'Wider networking outside the project group has been encouraged.'
- 'Formal agreement on roles and responsibilities is essential to the success of the partnerships.'
- 'Improved advice and guidance to staff, students, parents and employers is essential for the quality and success of provision.'

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11 The Scilly Isles Vocational Programmes



Searchable themes

Classification	Communication
Local LSC	Cornwall
Lead partner	Penwith College
Region	South-West
Type of institution	Tertiary and FE colleges, schools, hotels
Subject	Catering and sport, recreation and allied occupations
Qualification	NVQ at Level 1
Source	Penwith College, Five Islands School
Theme	Isolated communities, community learning
Urban/rural/mixed	Rural

Area of good practice

107

This programme was designed to overcome the particular difficulties of delivering vocational programmes to young people living and learning on the Scilly Isles. However, it may have relevance to other partnerships that are seeking to overcome geographical barriers and to address the educational and social needs of small, isolated communities.

Background and context

108

Penwith College is a tertiary college in Penzance with about 600 full-time and 4,000 part-time students. Its partner is Five Islands School – the confederation which serves the islands. The Scilly Isles have a population of about 1,800 and about 30 students make up Year 10 for all the islands. Flights to and from the islands (either by light plane or helicopter) take about 25 minutes, check-in and travel to the airport extends the journey from St Mary's to the college to about two hours.

109

The emergence of IFP in 2001 coincided with a desire by the education and lifelong learning leaders on the islands to renew their relationship with the immediate mainland. There is no post-16 provision on the islands but in recent years, partly due to the islanders' perceptions of social change in Penzance, post-16 opportunities have not been taken up at the college. Islanders have taken up residential opportunities elsewhere in England instead. This 14-16 pilot may serve to restore islanders' confidence about local college provision.

What happened?

110

Two vocational courses, NVQ at Level 1 in Catering and NVQ at Level 1 in Sport, Recreation and Allied Occupations, were offered to

the 29 students in Year 9 on the islands. Five chose to study sport, but only one chose to do catering. The students are taught by staff that are resident on the isles and employed by the colleges.

111

The NVQ in Catering is delivered by the head chef in the main hotel on St Mary's. The NVQ in Sport is based in the secondary part of the school and taught by a sports coach: students carry out tasks in realistic work environments by visiting regularly the four federated primary schools where vocational students help to deliver physical education (PE) programmes.

112

The students in both options were able to visit their respective colleges on the mainland several times during the year. In catering, this happened twice a term; in sport there was a one-day induction visit in the first term and a three-day residential block in the second term, during which students gained some work experience. These visits enabled students to access specialist facilities, such as the restaurant in the college and other facilities on the mainland, and to widen the social context of their vocational experience.

113

The colleges provided support to the island-based members of staff in order to help them design and deliver these NVQ programmes. In the case of sport, a school PE teacher also had involvement. Staff receive support through internal verification and assessor award training from staff that are based on the mainland. In addition, they are receiving assessor award training in order to qualify them to do the assessment.

Impact

114

So far the programmes have run very well, with positive views expressed by both the students and their school. It is noteworthy that all of the students are highly motivated and, as NFER analysis indicates, that they have a good level of academic achievement.

Next steps

115

The school has been very supportive of IFP and is looking to use it as a vehicle to restore and develop links with the two nearest

colleges on the mainland. This could be a means of cultivating lifelong learning opportunities on the isles that will contribute towards personal, community and economic development. The priority is to build educational and training capacity on the isles by training staff, supporting new provision and promoting the use of information and learning technology as an adjunct to, but not the sole means of, delivery.

116

From January Cornwall College will be running a GCSE Engineering programme with three further students from the islands.

117

Communication has been difficult at times and steps are being taken to ensure that regular, day-to-day exchange is effective and reliable.

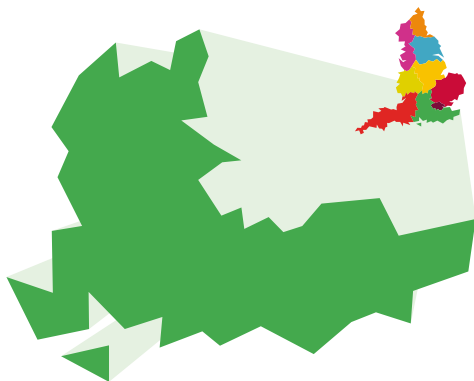
Learning points

- 'A balanced mixture of bringing teachers to learners and taking learners to new environments is likely to be an appropriate and economic way of extending learning opportunities.'
- 'Enhancing the educational role of local businesses and other organisations may increase educational opportunities significantly in an isolated community with limited access to a full range of institutions.'
- 'Colleges may find that they can extend their reach by identifying and supporting locally-based teachers.'
- 'Vocational learning can provide opportunities to extend social interaction – this is a key priority for islanders who can be vulnerable to the consequences of isolation.'
- 'IFP can provide opportunities to increase the involvement of a community in its own education and lifelong learning – individuals who are living in small communities may prove ready and able to 'pitch in' and provide face-to-face community learning.'

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12 East Sussex Strategic Control and Learning Partnerships



Searchable themes

Classification	General and management
Local LSC	Sussex
Partnership	Not applicable
Region	South-East
Type of institution	Not applicable
Subject	Not applicable
Qualification	Not applicable
Source	LSC Sussex
Theme	Strategy, 14-19 development, funding
Urban/rural/mixed	Not applicable

Area of good practice

118

In East Sussex, key stakeholders are looking to bring together parallel initiatives affecting vocational education, taking account of changes in inspection and accountability and anticipated changes in funding. By creating a steering group for 14-19 strategy and vesting it with strategic and funding responsibilities, they are seeking to give more coherence and consistency to vocational and general educational developments, and to maximise the opportunity that is provided by IFP and other initiatives to bring about further change.

Background and context

119

In Sussex, 14-19 policy (and IFP in particular) has been handled in different ways by: West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. In West Sussex, 14-19 development has been led by the LEA; in Brighton and Hove it has been led by a partnership between colleges and the LEA; in East Sussex there has been an attempt to bring together a large number of players and construct an inclusive steering group within a credible network for consultation and communication.

120

Those driving change perceive that the IFP has been successful at changing the curriculum for 5 per cent of each cohort, but that it has created expectations which cannot be matched by funding or capacity and that the percentage needing this kind of opportunity is 45 per cent. While IF has been successful at getting colleges to collaborate, it is less successful in developing collaboration between schools.

121

Funding and timelines of the Level 2 initiative, the student apprenticeship pilot (in West Sussex) and the IFP are not aligned at the moment, it is expected that these will merge within the overarching framework of a 14-19 strategy.

122

East Sussex's area inspection in spring 2004 and the development of its strategic response to these challenges is part of this preparation.

What happened?**123**

A large consultation meeting was organised in September 2002. This included representatives from schools, colleges, the LEA, LSC Sussex and Connexions. The meeting was instituted by a 14-19 steering group which consisted of the head of post-16 learning at LSC Sussex, the LEA's 14-19 officer, a representative from Connexions and the manager of the East Sussex Learning Partnership (ESLP). ESLP describes itself as a 'single strategic body ... bringing together all existing local partnership arrangements covering post-16 and lifelong learning'. The steering group reports to the Executive Director at the local LSC.

124

The 14-19 steering group has emerged as higher level strategic group in which key local stakeholders are represented. In order to sustain the capacity to communicate with the wider number of stakeholders on the ground, the steering group has developed a number of specialised working groups or networks to address particular sets of issues:

- an additional learning needs group with representatives from colleges and schools;
- a quality group;
- a head of sixth-forms group; and
- a series of joint school or college 14-19 seminars.

125

LSC Sussex now requires that bids for Level 2 projects or for discretionary funding for Increased Flexibility projects have to be routed through a funding panel that has been set up by the steering group; the bids are expected to take the overall strategy into account. The panel contained representatives from the LSC, LEA and ESLP; in addition, representation from Connexions was sought. Also, in the light of broad 14-19 strategies, the steering group would expect to have an input into decisions about the structure and organisation of schools and colleges through strategic area reviews.

Impact**126**

It appears that a more strategic and joined-up approach to 14-19 development is establishing itself. The steering group has been active and is growing in importance, and the forthcoming area-wide Ofsted inspection will provide a test of its progress.

Next steps**127**

The steering group is exploring and consulting on the development of data-sharing between institutions to support coordination and progression.

128

It is preparing for the next round of bids and is working to increase understanding of its strategy as well as the implications for bidding – for example, that bids can be cross-phase.

129

The steering group is looking for ways in which to separate operation issues from the overarching strategic development on which it wishes to focus.

Learning points

- 'IFP does provide an opportunity to build on cross-phase and intra-phase collaboration and enthusiasm about vocational education, in order to develop and implement a 14-19 strategy which will advance these developments.'
- 'Local LSCs can play a lead role in building the institutions, networks and systems for consultation that are necessary to build sufficient consensus and vision to move this agenda forward.'
- 'Those driving change are likely to want to build on existing relationships and integrate existing partnerships into new groups.'
- 'The combined impact of several vocational initiatives and the 14-19 agenda is raising expectations and pressure for change and modernisation in this area of provision.'

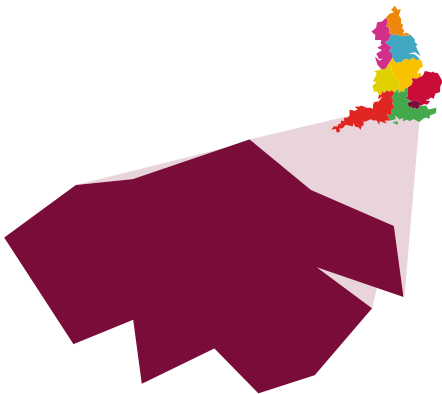
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Selection of Students and Delivery Issues

1 London Information and Communication Technology at Havering College



Searchable themes

Classification	Selection of students
Local LSC	London East
Lead partner	Havering College of Further and Higher Education
Region	London
Type of institution	FE college, 12-16 girls' comprehensive school
Subject	ICT
Qualification	GCSE
Source	Havering College
Theme	Communication, selection of courses, bilateral links, employer links
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

1
This partnership has taken care to match the particular needs of learners at a girls' school with the resources and teaching capacity of a local FE college. Successful matching has been backed up with well-informed selection and good communication, leading to a popular, growing course with high retention.

Background and context

2
Prior to IFP, Havering College had three years' experience of offering provision to the 14-16 cohort, including qualification and taster options. A school partnership arrangement exists between Havering College, Havering Sixth Form College and 13 11-16 schools in the borough. It was established in 1991, when Havering Sixth Form College was built and a number of schools disestablished their sixth form provision.

3
Frances Bardsley Girls' School was one of three schools in the borough that retained its sixth-form provision. Both the school and college had close ties, although this did not extend to sharing the curriculum until this project. Initial meetings were held at Havering College and were attended by the partner schools associated with it, as well as non-partner schools, such as Frances Bardsley Girls' School.

4
After deliberation with all the schools, a mutual agreement was reached between Frances Bardsley Girls' School and Havering College, the curriculum offer was agreed and a series of meetings took place to agree operations, such as transport arrangements, appropriate times and days of delivery and parental involvement.

5

The early participation of parents and pupils from the school proved very helpful. Parents were invited to both the school and college to discuss the offer and any concerns that they might have. While there was an interest in the curriculum offer, parental concern was expressed about issues related to the individual safety and welfare of the girls within the post-16 setting.

What happened?

6

Havering College was able to offer a discrete GCSE ICT programme to Frances Bardsley Girls' School with the support of IFP funding. It was able to meet a perceived need of the school in order to offer a challenging vocational programme in this area. Both college and school were aware that preparation and planning were necessary, not only to put the course into place, but also to build the necessary trust and meet common expectations. The college ran an open day on the college premises to which parents and learners were invited – parents and girls had to be convinced that the very different, co-educational environment of the college was appropriate for 14-16 learning. For its part, the school undertook a careful selection process in order to ensure that students joining the programme would be committed to the subject, able to meet the additional demands of learning off-site and ready to take on the GCSE ICT programme.

7

The applied GCSE in ICT formed part of the Year 9 options; Frances Bardsley Girls' School selected pupils on the basis of their previous attainment. The students travel to Havering College by public transport with an escort and a teacher on two afternoons each week, receiving three hours of tuition. In addition, they receive some additional support at school. Havering College has taken the responsibility of writing and teaching the course, assessing it and providing the necessary hardware and learning resources. However, there is an exchange of information between the school and the college.

8

Group sizes are generous. The first cohort consists of two classes, each with just 13 students. This group size matches equipment availability, but it also ensures that college lecturers who are used to

working with older students are able to meet the needs of their 14-16 learners fully. The second cohort has expanded to 45 students in Year 10, who are taught in three groups.

9

Havering College believes that it is able to provide students with up-to-date hardware and that its lecturers are particularly well-equipped to provide a vocational dimension to ICT learning. The lecturers have recent commercial experience and can draw upon the college's business links, in particular with the Ford Motor Company. For example, the students have been able to visit and make use of the Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence which Ford has developed in conjunction with the college.

10

Both school and college work together to monitor progress. College tutors and students carry out three progress reviews a year. They use the school's paperwork and reviews are shared with the school, who can then convey them to parents. College tutors attend school parents' evenings alongside other teachers.

Impact

11

As yet, there has been no formal assessment. However, retention has been exceptional for programmes of this kind. Students, lecturers and school teachers are extremely positive about the programme. The success of the programme has been communicated through the school: the second cohort has attracted almost twice the number of learners. A number of pupils on the programme recently received 'student of the year' awards, given as part of the college's general FE awards ceremony.

Next steps

12

Havering College is exploring the possibility of offering a GCSE Engineering programme to a further cohort of pupils from a school within its London borough.

13

Sustenance of such projects will rely on availability of funding for additional equipment, transport, teaching hours and other resources.

14

There are well-established progression routes from the applied GCSE – pupils are made aware of these during discussions in class. Progression programmes are available at the college at FE level (advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) in ICT, National Diploma in Computer Studies) and at higher level (HND in Computing, foundation degree in e-Commerce and BSc in Information Systems).

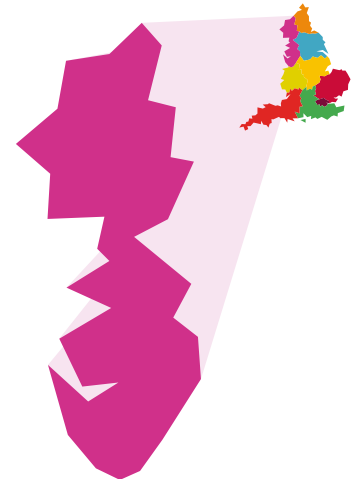
Learning points

- 'A well-tailored bilateral programme between a college and a school can be particularly successful at matching needs and resources.'
- 'Careful selection of students, good communication and small group sizes can all help to overcome initial apprehension and lack of 14-16 teaching experience.'
- 'While many schools are equipped to teach GCSE ICT, colleges may be able to offer more in terms of the quality of their hardware, staff or business links.'

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2 Liverpool Broadening the Curriculum



Searchable themes

Classification	Selection of programmes
Local LSC	Greater Merseyside
Partnership	Liverpool Community College, 22 secondary schools, Liverpool LEA, Liverpool Compact (Liverpool EBP), Greater Merseyside Connexions Service
Region	North-West
Type of institution	FE college, schools, LEA, Connexions, EBLO, training companies
Subject	Hairdressing, beauty therapy, hospitality and catering, performing arts, sport, recreation and leisure, business administration, IT, engineering, motor vehicle studies, construction trades, childcare, warehousing, retail
Qualification	NVQ, various vocational qualifications
Source	Liverpool Community College
Theme	Funding, general and management, links with employers
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

15

The collaboration, as equal partners involving the Liverpool Community College, a variety of schools, Liverpool LEA and Compact (the local EBLO), has enabled the partnership to offer a very wide range of vocational opportunities to young persons. By utilising college and WBL providers, not only is the partnership able to offer learning for most occupational areas, but also for different and various combinations of environments.

16

The partnership has sought to provide variety and flexibility. It has done this in order to meet the varied needs of 14-16 year olds and to exploit the learning resources that are available from a wide variety of training providers.

Background and context

17

Liverpool Community College is a large general FE college, operating on six sites across the whole of the City of Liverpool. It offers a wide range of academic and vocational programmes. The schools comprise 13 community comprehensives, eight Catholic high schools and one Church of England high school. The LEA is represented in the partnership by the Liverpool Secondary Schools Consortium. Liverpool Compact organises links with WBL providers and employers. The Connexions Service and all members of the

partnership are represented in the IFP operational group, which meets three times a week to monitor provision, deal with day-to-day operational issues, plan new provision and organise staff development, which is available to all partners.

What happened?

18

From 2001 to 2003, Liverpool Community College worked with the LEA on a schools' improvement programme that was funded by the LEA: this involved partnership with six specific schools and with Liverpool Compact. Further, many of the vocational faculties in the college had already developed opportunities for 14-16 learners, which usually took the form of 'in-fill' to existing programmes. This experience provided a foundation for Liverpool's Increased Flexibility offer, which has been able to present a comprehensive range of discrete, rather than in-fill, programmes.

19

A variety of delivery models and patterns of attendance are available. Learners can attend:

- three days in school and two in college (perhaps sampling different vocational areas);
- three days in school and two days with a WBL provider or employer; or
- three days in school, one day in college and one day with a WBL provider or employer.

20

Thirteen different vocational areas are offered, but a number of these can be followed in a variety of environments. For example, a learner may follow a construction programme in a discrete group in college workshops, through a placement with a WBL provider or employer, or by following a programme which combines both elements.

21

Cohort 1 provides about 230 student days in college and about 150 WBL days. Cohort 2 provides about 260 college days and 200 work-based days.

22

For all vocational areas there are work-based, college-based and mixed learning routes. Liverpool Compact has taken on the role of engaging and liaising with private training providers that supply placements themselves or with employers across the city. Some vocational placements – for example, in construction – are more difficult to find than others.

23

Building on their role in the organisation of work experience in the LEA, Liverpool Compact also ensures the quality of work-based provision through visits and checks. Currently, assessment is carried out by work-based trainers. However, where a programme is being delivered jointly, the partnership is looking at how the delivery, registration and assessment of NVQs and other qualifications can be coordinated better.

24

Liverpool Community College provides guidance on the students who are likely to be suitable for various courses. However, at present it is the schools themselves that are selecting young people for different vocational programmes and types of learning programme. There is evidence that schools are not selecting more able students and that there is inconsistency in the selection process between different schools.

25

There is scope for students to switch between work-based and college-based learning routes or between vocational areas. This can have an impact on successful completion of qualifications, as many of these require a full two-year course. However, students who fail to achieve a full qualification may achieve units towards an NVQ. Internal college awards have also been used and have proved very popular with learners.

26

The Liverpool IFP has managed to attract £100,000 a year in additional funding through the LEA's involvement in neighbourhood renewal. This has helped to finance the large contribution from private training providers. However, schools have accepted the principle that they should contribute to the cost of off-site learning. In 2003/04, schools are likely to be contributing around £350 a college place and £500 a work-based training place towards the

estimated full cost of around £600 and £700 respectively. Although this represents an increased contribution against 2002/03, demand for places remains buoyant. However, the cost implications of accepting places has led some schools to defer decisions over places from the summer to the autumn term, which has had an impact on programme administration.

27

Roles and responsibilities within the partnership are clearly defined:

- Liverpool Community College manages the programme with the LSC funding subsidy – it also delivers vocational learning in a wide range of areas;
- Liverpool WBL providers supplement and enhance curriculum provision – making vocational learning available in a wide range of areas;
- Liverpool LEA has secured additional funding for the programme – it also provides input and support from the schools' effectiveness officer, monitors quality of provision, helps in the development of support materials and to organise staff development and networking;
- Liverpool schools involved in the project identify and select the learners, retain primary duty of care towards them, organise their weekly timetable, maintain contact with parents or carers and retain records of achievement and attainment;
- Greater Merseyside Connexions Service provides additional personal adviser support, careers education and guidance and coordination of other support services; and
- Liverpool Compact (the local EBLO) provides the essential link with WBL providers – ensuring health and safety management, management of the application process, hosting operational group meetings, organising and managing WBL providers and helping to organise and deliver staff development.

Impact

28

As yet, there have not been any formal measures of performance. Attendance appears to have improved, although there are still some inconsistencies in the ways that different schools are recording this, which makes measurement and comparison difficult. It does appear that, for some students, improved attendance on vocational programmes supports improved attendance at school.

29

Providers are generally positive about learners and their progress. There are some concerns about the behaviour and suitability of small numbers of learners, but the partnership believes that it is putting measures into place which will improve these concerns.

30

Retention has been strong through cohort 1. There was a sharp fall over the summer (230 to 190) but much of this can be attributed to a particular school which changed its system of recording. However, the partnership is keen to improve its systems for recording in a consistent manner and is closely monitoring the numbers of students on each programme.

31

The partnership has organised and delivered staff development, including a two-day residential conference involving school teacher, college lecturers and WBL supervisors. This was particularly positive – marking the extent to which collaboration and partnership across institutions has become embedded.

Next steps

32

New programmes have been introduced in IT and business (Skills for Working Life, and an NVQ in Business Administration).

33

A key goal is to improve curriculum coherence. There is some good practice: for example, English teachers from one school have linked with hairdressing activities at college to deliver parts of the English curriculum. A small working group involving school teachers, college lecturers, LEA and Compact staff is meeting to discuss and develop models of curriculum coherence for IFP.

34

Another goal is to improve flexibility. The partnership is looking to use short qualifications such as Oxford Cambridge RSA (OCR) Skills for Working Life. This will allow learners to switch between programmes but to accumulate credits towards qualifications.

35

The partnership is also exploring a value-added system that could recognise the full range of achievements of learners taking part in IFPs. Such a system would quantify progress in attendance, for example, to avoid an overemphasis on qualification completion, which may be inappropriate for some during this phase.

Learning points

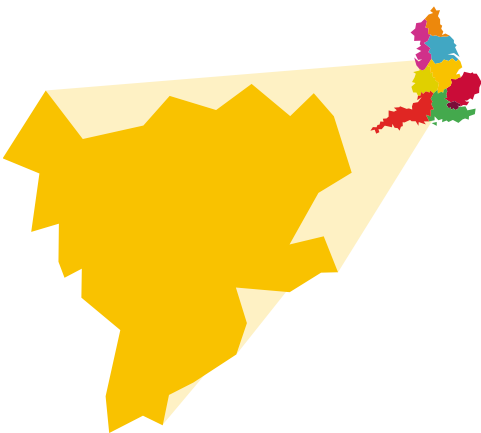
- 'Where IFP has built on extensive local experience, it may have been encouraged to develop a relatively ambitious offer.'
- 'A large college in an urban area may be able to offer a relatively diverse range of vocational and occupational learning experiences, particularly in partnership with private and link organisations.'
- 'The general acceptance that schools would have to contribute to the costs of off-site learning – if they were to receive enough places to match their needs – has empowered them. This appears to have encouraged the college to provide a relatively diverse range of programmes to meet the learners' needs. In the case of Liverpool, this responsiveness on both sides has been successful; despite the rising cost of programmes for schools, take-up is increasing.'
- 'A large and complex IFP creates considerable administrative demands which are difficult to fulfil unless the partners accept common systems of record keeping, monitoring, and so on.'
- 'Partnership can be made better by improvements in mutual understanding between participants that are working in different institutions.'

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3 Warwickshire College Student Apprenticeships



Searchable themes

Classification	Selection of programmes
Local LSC	Coventry and Warwickshire
Partnership	Warwickshire College, Royal Leamington spa, Rugby and Moreton Morrell
Region	East Midlands
Type of institution	FE college
Subject	Motor vehicle, agriculture, administration, retail, hairdressing
Qualification	NVQ, Institute of Motoring Industry (IMI) award, student apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship
Source	Warwickshire College, Royal Leamington spa, Rugby and Moreton Morrell
Theme	Student apprenticeship, WBL, work experience, employer engagement
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

36 This is a new route for young people aged 14-16 to gain a nationally-recognised qualification, while gaining real work experience. It also represents an additional strategy for engaging employers with pre-16 students.

37 The student apprenticeship concept was developed through the IFP and the first groups were started in September 2002 on a two-year programme. Having been shown to be successful, the model is now being extended to other vocational areas.

38 The model is also being adopted across the West Midlands as part of the wider 14-19 student apprenticeship model that has been developed by Warwickshire LEA.

Background and context

39 Warwickshire College, Royal Leamington spa, Rugby and Moreton Morrell has worked with Warwickshire LEA over the last five years and through a consortium of local schools to develop the pre-16 work-related learning provision. At the time that the IFP was announced, Warwickshire College, Royal Leamington spa, Rugby and Moreton Morrell was already working in partnership with 25 schools across the county and beyond, offering about 16 vocational qualifications, mostly at Level 1, through attendance at college one day a week over two years. The courses were marketed under the banner of 'Star 14'.

40

IFP provided an opportunity for the college to innovate and, in particular, to develop the offer of WBL for 14-16 year olds.

What happened?

41

The student apprenticeship framework was developed by the college together with Zenith Partnership, the college's work-based training provider, and Warwickshire LEA. This framework was designed to provide a phased balance of work-based and college-based learning that is intended to sustain the pace of learning and level of support necessary to ensure achievement of a qualification at Level 1. The framework has the following features:

- it is a two-year programme consisting of one day a week, beginning in Year 10;
- the first eight weeks are spent in college doing a work preparation course – this includes first aid and health and safety qualifications, communication skills, work placement searches, interview skills, employers' expectations and so on;
- the remainder of the two years follows a pattern of five weeks in work placement doing WBL, and every sixth week in college for underpinning knowledge and portfolio-building; and
- progress review and assessment also take place in the workplace.

42

The vocational areas offered in the first year were agriculture, motor vehicle studies, administration and retail. Unsurprisingly, motor vehicle studies proved to be the most popular area, and despite concerns that were raised in various quarters that garage placements would be difficult to find, employers were mostly very enthusiastic and responsive to the idea of bringing 14 year olds into the workplace. Many employers said that they were finding difficulty in recruiting young people with the skills and attitudes they were seeking.

Impact

43

Motor vehicle student apprenticeship: 10 students have now completed their first year and will progress into Year 2 in September 2003. They are working towards the Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) pre-apprenticeship award at Level 1, which is the technical certificate for a Modern Apprenticeship. This enables these students to be fast-tracked through the first year of a Modern Apprenticeship, post-16. Some of these students have been offered employment already, if they maintain their current levels of commitment and enthusiasm.

44

A survey carried out in March 2003 produced very positive responses from parents and students. Several student apprentices have received the additional incentive of a provisional job offer on completion of the programme.

45

Demand for the programme is growing, and employers are responding positively to the experience.

Next steps

46

Recruitment on the motor vehicle programme has doubled with 24 new students for September 2003. An additional vocational area, the NVQ in Hairdressing, began in September 2003 with 12 students.

47

Introduction of wider Key Skills into the framework is planned. The partnership wants to ensure that employers are more involved in the training schedules of their students. It also plans to develop this model in other vocational areas for September 2005.

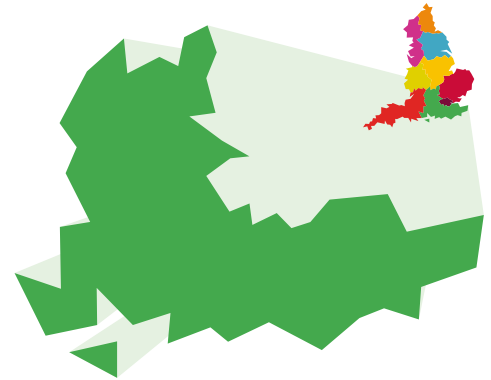
Learning points

- 'Successful practice on the provision of off-site learning for 14-16 year olds in college can provide the foundation for a further step into more extended WBL.'
- 'Within a carefully-designed framework, colleges are able to prepare young people for WBL and to provide the necessary assessment and support to achieve Level 1 vocational or occupational qualifications and Key Skills.'
- 'There are particular opportunities in the motor vehicle sector where employer needs and the emergence and recognition of appropriate qualifications combine to support the early entry of young people into WBL.'
- 'IFP innovation can benefit from additional support if it fits well with the direction and strategy of LEA developments.'

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4 Surrey Countrywide Systems for Student Selection



Searchable themes

Classification	Selection of students
Local LSC	Surrey
Partnership	Not applicable
Region	South-East
Type of institution	Schools, colleges, partnerships, LEA, LSC
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	LSC Surrey
Theme	Communication, general and management
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

48

Building on an initiative in one part of the country, Surrey has developed a countywide system for the recruitment and selection of students to IFPs. This system has clarified expectations and improved communication, leading to better planning and a better fit between students and programmes. (Sample documents are included below.)

Background and context

49

In the South-West of Surrey, several partnerships used IFP funding to buy in provision from colleges other than the lead college. This method, combined with limits on planning time, resulted in confusion over the roles and responsibilities of delivery and lead colleges from the perspective of all the partners. Therefore, collaboration over application and selection was limited.

50

Discussions at steering groups during the first term of cohort 1 indicated that issues included a predominance of lower ability students, and confusion on the part of schools as to the respective roles and responsibilities of the lead college and delivery college (where they were different institutions). Communications within partnerships were also identified as an issue, and the lack of a named contact in partner organisations was regularly cited as a cause of this.

What happened?

51

The colleges in South-West Surrey met to try to develop common procedures which would make the process much clearer and simpler. They began by working together on the paperwork and timetable governing selection and went on to develop agreement on roles and responsibilities in this process. These developments were fed back to

Sample 1: IFP school-college agreement

Aims and Targets – please read and show your agreement and understanding

Aim: To create enhanced vocational and work-related learning opportunities for 14-16 year olds of all abilities.

Targets:

- one third of the young people in the project should gain at least one GCSE in a vocational subject at Level 2 (over and above their predicted GCSEs);
- one third should gain at least one VRQ/NVQ at Level 1 (over and above their predicted GCSEs);
- three quarters of the young people involved should progress into further education or training; and
- attendance rates of the young people involved should match those of the year group overall at participating schools, to include time spent in school, and college and with employers.

I understand and accept the aims and targets of the Increased Flexibility for 14-16 Year Olds Programme, and as a Partner of [Partnership Name] Partnership I fully support the ethos of this programme.

Headteacher's signature _____

Position _____

School _____

Date _____

Contact Details – Please fill in the details of the contact for operational matters, and the contact for strategic matters – this may be the same person.

Operational Contact _____

Tel _____

E-mail _____

Preferred method of communication _____

Strategic Contact _____

Tel _____

E-mail _____

Preferred method of communication _____

the other Surrey partnerships through the LSDA network group; they expressed an interest in using these processes and procedures.

52
In discussion with all the Surrey partnerships, LEA and LSC Surrey, it was proposed that a model of application and selection be developed, so that all partners could take an active part in the selection process, encouraging further collaboration and ensuring that the right students were chosen for the right course.

53
A working group produced a timetable and put together application forms that would ensure Surrey-wide consistency; these incorporated a thorough risk assessment, and a section for contact details for operational and strategic contacts. The working group also recommended that college representatives take an active role in the application process: going to schools' options evenings and holding taster days where students could meet college tutors and talk about pursuing a particular course. This Surrey-wide process and paperwork has been used for the recruitment and selection of the second cohort; initial impressions are that this has made the process smoother and clearer.

Impact

54
The paperwork and process have been used across Surrey by all of the partnerships and seems to have had a positive impact on the application and selection of students. Some adjustments are being made as a response to feedback, and it is hoped that the amendments will improve this good practice further.

Sample 2: IFP timetable

Activity	Details	Date
Preparation	Colleges to visit schools' Year 9 options events and, where possible, work with schools to identify students who may benefit from IFP	Various
Application	Application, risk assessment, parental consent and medical forms sent to schools	No later than the end of the spring term
	Schools fill in and return application form to lead college for each student applying for Increased Flexibility	
	Students selected to go forward are invited to a confirmation of choices day; invitations are sent through schools	First week of summer term
Confirmation of choices/ taster day	<p>Aim: an opportunity for the student to try out the course they have chosen and for the college to ensure that an aptitude for the subject is present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This day will be for students and teachers. ● Includes practical assessment, if appropriate. ● According to the activities of this day, a final selection will be made and students who are not confirmed with a place may be allocated one on a waiting list. ● The lead college will contact the school with an offer of a place, and the waiting list, by summer half-term. ● At this point, the students will be invited to an induction afternoon. ● A copy of the IFP four-way agreement which is to be signed by student, school, parent and college will be sent, along with the invitation, to school contacts. The agreement contains a request to forward a copy to the parents, a note drawing attention to important clauses and arrangements to sign on induction afternoon (please see below). ● The school (with parents) to return completed parental consent and medical forms, by the first week after summer half-term. 	
Induction afternoon	<p>Aim: to acquaint students with styles of learning and college life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This event will include a session at the end of the day where parents, students, school and college sign the IFP four-way agreement, incorporating: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 details of courses, times and dates, what to bring, absence procedures; 2 rules of college and disciplinary procedures; and 3 requirements of the IFP – that is, attendance at school. 	After summer half-term

55

Responses have been sought from all partners through steering groups, the network group and area collaboration groups (which consist of college and school principals). In addition, the LEA has been consulted and the working group has looked in detail at the forms, making amendments accordingly.

Next steps

56

There will be some adjustments to the forms to make them more user-friendly, and the working group (consisting of representatives from colleges, schools and LSC Surrey) continues to meet, extending this good practice into other Increased Flexibility processes.

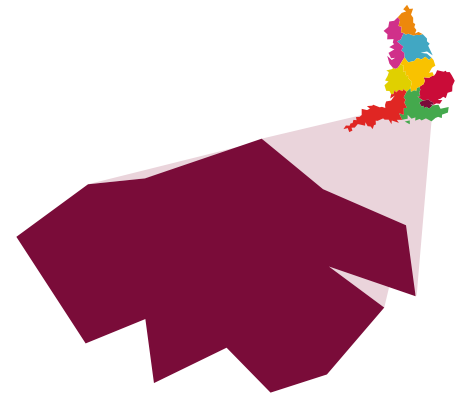
Learning points

- 'Good practice within one partnership can provide the model for improvements across the whole LSC.'
- 'Selection and recruitment is one aspect of IFP where the need for close collaboration is most pressing and the benefits from collaboration are easy to recognise for all partners.'
- 'Historic preconceptions about the kind of students that should participate in Increased Flexibility can be modified if key partners are able to participate in the development and design of credible, well-prepared systems to govern this process.'
- 'Evaluation may be able to reveal the extent to which this kind of system affects the performance of different cohorts.'

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5 Waltham Forest Applied GCSE Engineering



Searchable themes

Classification	Delivery
Local LSC	London North
Lead partner	Waltham Forest College
Region	London
Type of institution	FE college
Subject	Engineering
Qualification	GCSE, IMI pre-apprenticeship award
Source	Peter Jaggs
Theme	Motor vehicle, college consortium, resource development
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

57

Three FE colleges have collaborated together in order to design and write an applied GCSE Engineering programme. The first year of the programme has been organised around a comprehensive project which has a number of sub-projects: making and driving go-karts. The GCSE Engineering qualification is complemented by the Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) pre-apprenticeship award.

Background and context

58

Waltham Forest College wished to provide programmes that would prepare school pupils for industry and provide the qualifications and people that industry seeks, moving away from the old model of a link programme designed for disaffected students. The vocational GCSE was developed in collaboration with other colleges, but in the first year it was offered only to one school by Waltham Forest College. The colleges have sought to develop a programme that enjoyed the credibility of a GCSE but which had the practical appeal and content to succeed with the young people that they were likely to recruit.

59

Waltham Forest College was successful in seeking IFP funding. It already enjoyed links with Rushcroft School through work experience. On this pilot project, the college had 'the freedom to choose a partner with whom you knew it would work'. An open evening for parents and students was held which generated 43 candidates for 20 places. These candidates were interviewed jointly by the college and the school.

What happened?

60

Over the last three years, three FE colleges in East London: Epping College; Hackney College; and Waltham Forest College, have been

working together as a consortium (a skills and technology training confederation). They meet every six weeks or so to develop their engineering courses and share resources. When the Engineering GCSE was first published, this group recognised the opportunity for a joint response and decided to develop a common course. Led by John Gould, the consortium has designed a common scheme of work, with a focus on motor vehicle engineering, using the Edexcel Award. Tutors from all three colleges have contributed learning materials.

61

The decision to focus on motor vehicle engineering was a pragmatic one. It built on the known interests of staff and students; on understanding of the kinds of expertise, resources and extra-curricular activities that would be available; and it also gave an attractive context in which to situate much of the learning: motor driving.

62

The consortium is confident that progression opportunities for applied GCSE Engineering students are available locally. The more academic students can go on to BTEC national programmes and then progress to HND or HNC programmes, while the more practical students can go into WBL; Modern Apprenticeship places are available with local employers through Waltham Forest College and other local managing agencies.

63

Students have been able to develop skills and knowledge by designing, building and then driving their own go-karts. On two occasions the group went go-kart driving – this proved extremely popular with students and staff alike. Students have been provided with specialised driving kit. In order to support this approach and to provide an interim qualification, the students will also have the opportunity to gain the IMI (Level 1) pre-apprenticeship qualification. This will support progression into a variety of work-based training and provide early experience of competence logging. All students will have the opportunity to gain both qualifications. In the second year of the programme, the focus of the course will broaden out to other aspects of engineering, drawing and computer-aided design (CAD); turning; drilling; and milling.

64

Students attend two afternoons a week from 14.00 to 17.00. It is a mark of high student commitment that not only do students regularly stay on for an additional hour beyond the school day, twice a week, but they have also chosen to attend college during half-term.

65

Last year saw strong growth of this successful programme. While the first cohort progress to their second year, Rushcroft School will supply a new Year 10 group, who are to be joined by two additional groups: one from Leytonstone School; and one from Northumberland Park Community School (in Haringey). In the latter case, delivery of the programme will be shared between the school and the college; one of the two weekly sessions will be delivered at the school, although a schoolteacher will contribute to the college session.

66

The programme has been relatively expensive in terms of consumables, parts and visits. Waltham Forest College estimates that additional costs over the first year significantly exceeded those provided by IFP funding.

Impact**67**

Learner retention has been strong: 17 out of 20 remained in the programme over the first year; there has also been a growth in numbers at Waltham Forest College and two other colleges. This provides evidence of positive feedback.

68

Students and lecturers have been extremely positive about their experiences, and collaboration between colleges (as well as between colleges and schools) has been developed and confirmed.

Next steps**69**

Consortium activity has been encouraged, and there are opportunities to draw other partners, such as schools, into the work of the consortium. In addition, Waltham Forest College is looking to develop further industrial links in order to support the programme.

70

The engineering departments of the three colleges are now making joint decisions about which courses to run and have begun to talk about which options will be offered. Colleges are now sharing some workshops, and there are opportunities to focus on what each of them does best.

Learning points

- 'Without the GCSE we would not have got so far down the road for co-operation.'
- 'Inter-college collaboration can make a strong contribution to the cost and other demands of developing a new programme, in particular GCSE Engineering; in this case study, Waltham Forest College could call on a relatively extensive commitment of development time for, at the least in the first year, a relatively small number of students.'
- 'The IFP provides an excellent catalyst for the development of inter-college collaboration; in part, this may be due to the fact that colleges do not perceive themselves as competing with supplying vocational programmes for their local partner schools.'
- 'GCSE Engineering can be organised around a particular activity – in this case, making and racing go-karts – which makes a direct appeal to the imagination and aspirations of young people.'
- 'Complementary qualifications, for example the IMI pre-apprenticeship award, can extend assessment experience and outcomes.'

Contact

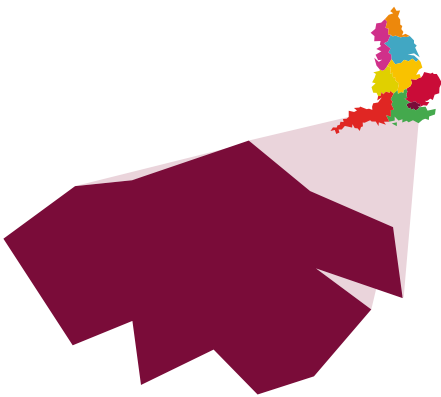
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6 North-East London Saturday Art College



Searchable themes

Classification	Delivery
Local LSC	North London
Partnership	Nexus
Region	London
Type of institution	FE college, comprehensive schools
Subject	Art
Qualification	Applied GCSE
Source	College of North-East London (CONEL)
Theme	Gifted and talented, widening participation, excellence challenge
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

71
The applied GCSE in Art is delivered through the vehicle of a Saturday art college. Teachers, students and their parents have responded enthusiastically to this programme, which is beginning to expand both in numbers and across other vocational areas. The programme also addressed the agendas of excellence challenge and widening participation.

Background and context

72
Nexus is a collaboration of sixth-forms which includes the College of North-East London (CONEL) and five schools: Northumberland Park Community School; Park View Academy; Greggs City Academy; Gladesmore Community School; and White Hart Lane Community School, all of which are located on the eastern side of the Borough of Haringey. This particular project represents a new development for Nexus, namely a contribution to the 14-16 curriculum.

73
Haringey is an inner-city area with high levels of economic and social deprivation; it continues to experience change in its educational institutions. This 'gifted and talented' programme is closely bound up with the local excellence challenge and widening participation strategies in order to meet and raise aspirations.

What happened?

74
The thinking behind the offer of a Saturday morning applied GCSE programme was that it seized an opportunity for curriculum enrichment, introducing 14-16 year olds to the environment of

post-16 education and pathways for further progression. A Saturday morning programme does not clash with the existing school curriculum, so access is not restricted by other curriculum commitments. Furthermore, such a programme is voluntary and, by nature, sets itself the challenge of proving its value to participants. CONEL was aware that good practice existed in out-of-hours provision elsewhere in north London which could be reproduced in this part of Haringey.

75

The 15 Saturday college places were advertised, through the five partner schools, to academic students in Year 10 who were unable to take art in their options, but were gifted in the subject. Initially, the art and design departments at the schools nominated 30 candidates; CONEL carried out interviews and invited the students to a trial three-hour session; it then selected 15 students, which rose subsequently to 16.

76

Students receive three hours' tuition a week, although additional sessions are planned for the holidays in Year 11. It is planned that 34 sessions will take place in Year 10, and 32 in Year 11. Students are given an A1 art portfolio and receive a £10 allowance towards travelling expenses for each session, which has helped to confirm the distinction that participating students feel.

77

An open day and open evening included both a special show and an opportunity to report to parents; these were extremely successful and well-attended by parents and families.

Impact

78

All of the students have been retained, and attendance has been outstanding. Students and teachers are extremely positive about the programme; the students take the view that they have made a choice and are now part of a special group. The teachers are confident that all 16 students will achieve at least a C grade in the double GCSE.

79

CONEL believes that the students are ambassadors to the schools, communicating a positive message about CONEL. At the same time, positive feedback from staff is encouraging college staff to contribute to this programme. A variety of specialist staff have agreed to deliver specialist components during the second year of the course.

Next steps

80

From September 2003 Nexus will be offering two Saturday morning art groups in Year 10. Building on this experience, CONEL plans to reprogramme an existing IT applied GCSE programme away from school hours to twilight. The current programme has failed to recruit students who are able to meet the demands of the double GCSE. The programme will be targeted at students who, by achieving a grade C applied GCSE, will pass the five grade C threshold.

81

CONEL is exploring the possibility of providing out-of-hours learning partly or fully in schools. It is working with Haringey EBP to develop industrial links and, in particular, to get artists to contribute to the teaching of the programme. More work is to be done on assessment with the Year 11 group.

Learning points

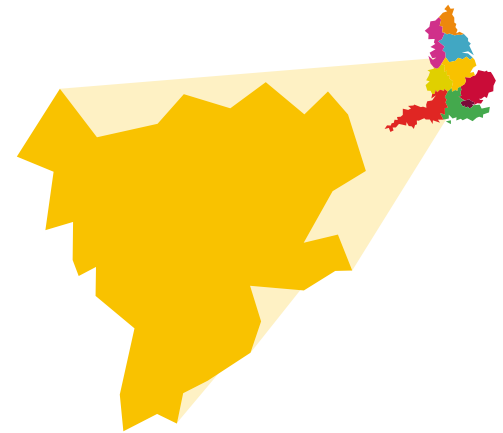
- 'Out of hours provision represents a considerable opportunity to extend the curriculum, particularly with respect to out of school provision of vocational programmes to relatively able students.'
- 'Out of hours provision can be designed in order to enjoy high status and motivate students and teachers.'
- 'Out of hours provision may not be particularly expensive for a college.'
- 'Selective applied GCSE programmes that are delivered in college can address the widening access and 'gifted and talented' agendas.'
- 'Differentiating the timing, place and entry into learning programmes can improve the experience of learning for both teachers and learners.'

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7 Nottingham Taster Days for Year 9 Pupils



Searchable themes

Classification	Recruitment of students
Local LSC	Nottinghamshire
Partnership	Education and training organisation
Region	East Midlands
Type of institution	School, national training organisation (NTO)
Subject	Health and social care, travel and tourism
Qualification	GCSE, GNVQ, foundation
Source	Springboard UK
Theme	Careers information, recruitment, links with employers, NTOs
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

82

Planning and preparation of IFPs need to take place well in advance of the starting date in Year 10. Successful foundations can be laid down in Year 9 with activities that involve school and college staff, training providers, pupils and parents. Opportunities need to be provided for pupils to find out more about the options available: qualifications; career routes; different occupational sectors; and so on. Taster days are good examples of how pupils in Year 9 can gain an insight into the courses that are on offer in Year 10. Springboard UK organised a taster day in Nottingham, in collaboration with the Connexions Service and the LEA, for a group of 20 students from local city schools.

Background and context

83

In Year 9 most schools initiate the 'options' process, asking pupils to make choices that will determine their future career progression routes. This process may involve the school organising a careers convention or making arrangements for its pupils to attend one outside of school which is organised by the local careers or Connexions service and/or EBP. Also, many students will be given opportunities to search for different jobs in an industry by using a Skills Match-type IT software programme. The problem is that many students have very little understanding of some, if not all, of the vocational areas on the menu. This is where training and industry representative organisations can help.

84

Springboard UK is a nationwide organisation promoting careers in hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism. It provides free specialist careers advice for anyone wishing to work in the industry which is supported by a range of practical products, services and events. A good example of a special, active event organised in 2003 was the taster day event in Nottingham. The organisation has a network of centres across the UK which help to deliver a highly-regarded educational programme to support the curriculum in schools. Last year it gave free, objective careers advice to over 14,000 people.

What happened?**85**

Springboard UK organised a taster day for 20 Year 9 pupils to investigate the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries. At the beginning of the day, the pupils were introduced to Springboard UK; who it represents and what it does. The first half was taken up by the 'Nottingham Discovery Trail'. The group met in the Town Hall Square at 09.15 before setting off on a two-hour walk around key areas of the city centre, highlighting the different sectors of the industries under focus.

86

Each pupil was provided with a trail leaflet containing a map to follow and a series of questions to be answered during the course of the walk. The answers were not always to be found at eye level and/or outside. Pupils were expected to enter some establishments to find the answers from members of staff (who were expecting them). At the conclusion of the walk they all met in a city centre hotel, shared and discussed answers to the quiz and were debriefed.

87

After a buffet lunch, students were divided into small groups and taken on a tour of the hotel, meeting employees in both the front and back of house. At four locations in the hotel, they undertook an activity that introduced them to some industry skills, including:

- housekeeping – making a bed;
- restaurant preparation – laying a table and folding a napkin;
- reception service – taking a reservation; and
- bar work – taking an order and table service.

88

The pupils took a break for refreshments at 15.00 and were introduced informally to selected hotel staff who told them about what they did at work, how they started in the industry and their career routes so far. The day concluded with completion of a questionnaire, and pupils were given a pack of materials to take home, including a video and CD containing career information, skill challenges and some fun games.

Impact**89**

The taster days are very popular events with young people; evaluation returns are very positive about the experiences received. The events are seen as well worth the cost of resources to plan and deliver. The pupils enjoy visiting real working environments and, in particular, meeting with young employees of age 17 or 18, who they can relate to and rely on to get the inside track on the world of work.

90

The industries involved are very supportive, as they see it as an opportunity to influence the career choices of young people who may be their recruits of the future. As one manager put it: 'It is in every food service company's interest to promote careers in the industry we work for, without this investment now, our company might not survive into the future.'

Next steps**91**

The success of taster day events such as the one in Nottingham has led to the organisation of other events. For example, every 18 months Springboard UK facilitates 'Careers Festivals', a series of nationwide events to demonstrate the fun, excitement, career products and variety of opportunities that are available by working in hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism. It organises work-shadowing opportunities for young people known, as 'Buddy Days'. Employees are asked to show their 'buddy' how they progressed to their position and how every day is different.

92

Springboard UK also organises the annual 'Futurechef' competition, where pupils aged 12-14 are given the opportunity to show off their culinary skills. The reward for the winner is an opportunity to work with a celebrity chef.

93

Springboard UK is continuing to organise national programmes to inspire and motivate potential recruits and current employees, including ambassador schemes and the 'spread network' of enthusiastic employees who want to inspire others to take up a career in health, leisure, travel and tourism.

94

The industry is aware that it needs to enthuse parents and guardians as well as young people. Increasingly, hands-on insights and experiences are being organised for them.

Learning points

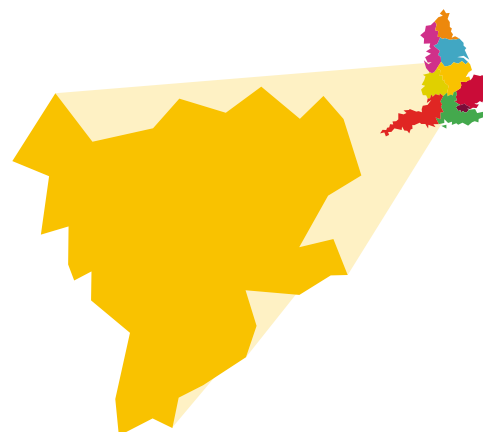
- 'Businesses can provide lively, up-to-date information to meet the needs of pupils and their teachers.'
- 'Collaboration with companies and training organisations offers opportunities for people in education to learn about business and industry, and people in business and industry to keep up-to-date with educational developments.'
- 'Training organisations have considerable expertise and experience in the development of active learning teaching and learning styles.'
- 'The involvement of company employees in school-business links can support personal and professional development.'
- 'Regular reviews should take place to ensure that learning objectives are being met.'

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8 Northampton Complementary Courses



Searchable themes

Classification	Selection of courses
Local LSC	Northamptonshire
Lead partners	Moulton College and Northampton College
Region	East Midlands
Type of institution	Specialist college and general FE college
Subject	Applied science, art and design, leisure and tourism, ICT, engineering, construction and health and social care
Qualification	City and guilds progression award, applying Engineering Principles, Levels 1 and 2
Source	Moulton College and Northampton College
Theme	Complementary qualifications, Level 1 qualifications
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

95

A partnership led by a specialist vocational college seeks to meet students' needs, making the most of (and developing) staff and other resources, by offering complementary Level 1 vocational qualifications as well as applied GCSEs for all of its IFPs.

96

It has been the responsibility of each subject group to identify an appropriate Level 1 qualification. Level 1 qualifications provide a

number of benefits, including a more vocational approach in terms of style and assessment and an interim recognition of progress for participants.

Background and context

97

Moulton College and Northampton College have a long history of collaboration in Northamptonshire. Northampton College is a general FE college for the central Northamptonshire area and Moulton College is a regional centre of excellence for education and training for the land-based, construction and furniture industries (further background on this partnership is available in Case Study 10 in section 1: Northampton – Pathways Partnerships).

What happened?

98

The bid was approved in March 2002. Moulton College would be lead partner, provide the project coordinator and manage the funding for the project. Five pathways would be offered, each based on an applied GCSE together with an additional vocational qualification at Level 1. Pathway partnerships would be set up to plan, develop and implement each pathway. Each pathway partnership was asked to research and identify a Level 1 vocational qualification listed in section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 which could be delivered with their applied GCSE.

99

Moulton College bid for and obtained additional funding through the LSDA in order to support additional pathway meetings and the necessary curricular development.

100

Schools and colleges have collaborated to deliver and assess the two qualifications. In several cases, vocational courses are being coordinated by school-based teachers, delivered jointly by schools and colleges and followed by school-based students.

101

All pathways partnerships have operated effectively and within the set budgetary arrangements in 2002/03, with 159 students recruited to the pathways that were offered.

102

Table 1 shows the additional Level 1 courses that have been introduced alongside applied GCSEs:

Table 1: Additional Level 1 courses

Level 1 vocational qualification	Applied GCSE
City and Guilds Certificate in Photography	Art and Design
City and Guilds Progression Award, applying Engineering Principles 1	Engineering
OCR City and Guilds 7262 Certificate for IT Users, Level 1	ICT
City and Guilds Certificate in Travel Destinations, Level 1	Leisure and Tourism
ASDAN Award in Citizenship, Level 1	Applied Science

Impact

103

Students have responded very positively to the 'additional qualification'. They showed enthusiasm and commitment in attending and preparing for the assessments that took place in Year 10.

104

Students' initial achievement – particularly in vocational qualifications – has been higher than expected, and this has generated a 'feelgood' factor for students, lecturers and teachers.

Next steps

105

The engineering pathway partnership has judged that the City and Guilds progression award, applying Engineering Principles Levels 1 and 2, is better suited to students' needs than the GCSE, since the delivery and assessment regime of these qualifications provides a better fit with the needs of their cohort in terms of motivation and success.

106

The development of additional pathway partnerships for cohort 2 in construction and health and social care which began in September 2003 has required new qualifications.

Table 2: Additional pathway qualifications

Level 1 vocational qualification	Applied GCSE/Level 2
British Sign Language award	Health and Social Care
Construction Industry Training Board Foundation Construction Award	(CITB) CITB Intermediate Construction Award

Learning points

- 'Programming for two qualifications within IFP provides an opportunity to test the appropriateness of a variety of alternative qualifications.'
- 'Applied GCSEs do not meet the needs of all students on all pathways and as yet they are not available in some areas, for example, construction.'
- 'Selection of different vocational programmes by cluster teams leads to a diverse range of IFPs with high teacher or lecturer commitment.'
- 'Even where it has been difficult to find an obvious complementary vocational qualification (for example, for art and design), a satisfactory option has been found which is engaging students and contributing positively to the applied GCSE.'
- 'Offering a more complex mix of qualification types with different names, values, assessment requirements and timings and recognition, increases the need for close collaboration between partners and for effective communication with employers, schools and parents.'

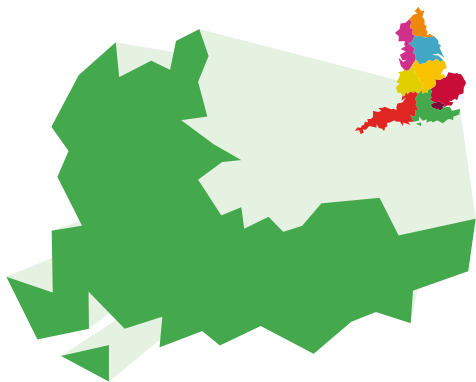
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Professional and Resource Development

1 Berkshire Ancillary Staff Support for Increased Flexibility Programmes



Searchable themes

Classification	Support and mentoring
Local LSC	Berkshire
Partnership	Programme team
Region	South-East
Type of institution	FE college
Subject	Various
Qualification	Entry level
Source	LSC Berkshire
Theme	Staff development
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

1 The IFP brought in arrangements which led to new projects and programmes for many schools and colleges. In the initial stages some problems were encountered, including managing student behaviour in a different context and introducing and/or adapting new styles of teaching and learning. This case study illustrates how two colleges used funding from their local LSC to employ ancillary staff, in order to tackle these early challenges.

Background and context

2 Earlier projects for disengaged students highlighted a need for support of entry-level students. Dealing with underachieving and less motivated students brought up problems which were time-consuming and difficult to resolve. Behaviour management, attendance and enthusiasm for lessons were serious problems shown by a minority of students. Two lead IFP partnership colleges received funding from the LSC in order to appoint support staff to work with students and help them raise their achievement and enthusiasm for the programme. Reading College and School of Arts and Design funded a link worker from the local EBP to work with IFP students, and Berkshire College of Agriculture employed learning assistants to support groups of learners on the IFP in the college.

What happened?

3 Central Berkshire EBP funded a link worker to support learners on the IFP both in Reading College and also in school. The link worker described herself as 'being there for the learner', and as technically she was not employed by either the partner school or the college, she felt that she could support the student in a neutral and impartial way.

4 The link worker was able to liaise with the school and college staff who were involved in the programme. She discussed progress of

individual learners with them, followed up attendance issues and other issues regarding completing set work and catching up with schoolwork that had been missed through non-attendance.

5

The learners saw the link worker as their first point of call for any problems that they might have, and she acted as an advocate on their behalf. One of the main strengths of her position was flexibility in the use of her time.

6

The link worker meets with the programme coordinator regularly to provide informal feedback, while also being part of the organisational group to provide more formal feedback on a twice-termly basis.

7

Berkshire College of Agriculture engaged learning support assistants to help groups of learners on the IFP in the college. The assistants supported whole groups of learners in class while they were in college. They had a flexible brief which enabled them to work with small groups of learners and/or individuals, depending on the circumstances. This brief also covered behaviour management and attendance monitoring.

8

The learning support assistants' approach in this environment differed from that taken in a school, in that they were not attached to specific learners. They were also available to support course tutors in organising trips and speakers and generally to increase the vocational focus of courses.

Impact

9

Evaluation revealed that the assistants established good relationships with the learners and were able to contribute in both formal and informal ways. The colleges acknowledged that the students benefited from their presence in the classroom.

10

The system of having a liaison person to work on behalf of the learners across the partnership was highly praised by all concerned.

It has to be emphasised that the success of people in posts similar to this depends on the skills and abilities that they already possess.

Next steps

11

Within the remit of the link worker role there are opportunities to include such tasks as increasing the vocational aspects of courses on offer, and bringing more employer engagement to the programme.

12

It is planned that the link worker will hold a surgery in each of the 14 participating schools at least once a term. During this visit, the link worker will provide feedback to school staff and will be briefed on the progress of the student while they are in school. In some cases, the link worker will have the opportunity to negotiate the disapplication of certain national curriculum subjects on behalf of those students who might be required to study for 10 GCSEs during their four days in school.

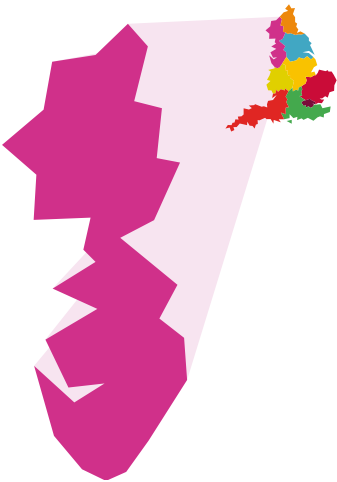
Learning points

- 'Support staff are part of a team and complement the work of other team members.'
- 'Appointing support staff allows teachers and tutors to concentrate on the main functions of their role in both the classroom and workplace.'
- 'When working closely with young people, support staff require special skills and the ability to empathise.'
- 'Support staff also require proper induction, training and staff development opportunities.'
- 'Evidence indicates that attendance, truancy and achievement improve when support staff are appointed to work with students.'
- 'The development of support staff and the support staff role represent important opportunities for everyone involved.'

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2 West Cumbria Staff Development in the Lakes College Partnership



Searchable themes

Classification	Professional development
Local LSC	Cumbria
Partnership	Lakes College, West Cumbria
Region	North-West
Type of institution	Secondary and tertiary education, LSDA
Subject	Applied GCSE
Qualification	Applied GCSE
Source	LSC Cumbria
Theme	Staff development, general and management, online learning, resource development
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

13
The Lakes College partnership made support for staff development a priority when it first came together. With LSC IFP funding, and LSDA support, the partnership undertook a training needs analysis of partner schools and colleges and drew up a training and staff development programme in order to meet these needs. This contributed to an increase in trust and helped to strengthen the partnership. Topics that had been identified for the training

programme provided guidance to other organisations that were considering offering similar training programmes to teachers and lecturers who were new to IFP.

Background and context

14
The Lakes College partnership, based in West Cumbria, originally consisted of 10 schools (out of 13 in the region) and an FE college. In 2002 the partnership successfully applied to LSDA to become a local network for the Increased Flexibility support programme. Part of the funding received was designated for staff development. The newly-appointed IFP manager was tasked with visiting partner institutions in order to identify their training and staff development needs.

15
Interest from tutors and teachers was high, due to the positive view that the new GCSEs met the needs of pupils who were not well served by the old GCSEs, both in terms of their content and method of delivery. This interest was reflected later in the attendance rates for, and evaluation returns from, the courses.

What happened?**16**

The IFP manager reported that the needs analysis revealed much apprehension: some was shared by teachers and tutors, some expressed only by FE tutors or schoolteachers. Most related to a lack of knowledge and skills, leading to low confidence in their ability to cope with the students on the new courses.

17

A staff development programme was drawn up, calling on various partner organisations and individuals with the experience and expertise to deliver different aspects of the course. For example, the LEA child protection officer led a session on 'Child Protection – The Rules'; a facilitator from Cumbria Business Education Consortia led a session on employer involvement; and the FE college assistant principal briefed and updated teachers on vocational subjects and the National Vocational Framework. The partnership also received three days of support from the LSDA, which focused on four of the new GCSEs in Health and Social Care, Applied ICT, Applied Business and Leisure and Tourism. Most of the sessions lasted for three hours and generally took place in the afternoon (13.00-16.00) or the early evening (16.00-19.00). On the whole, attendance was very good (92 per cent).

18

Topics covered by the programme included:

- child protection and the law;
- differentiation and learning styles;
- managing behaviour;
- risk assessment;
- health and safety;
- employer involvement;
- 14-16 issues;
- assessment and assignment design;
- integration of vocational subjects;
- national qualifications framework; and
- focus on subjects: (Health and Social Care, Information and Communication Technology, Business and Leisure and Tourism).

19

Some of the IFP funding was allocated to the development of online resources for science. One day of the staff development programme was set aside for bringing teachers together to collaborate on the programme. Led by the deputy headteacher of Southfield Technology College, the objective of the meeting was to produce high-quality science resources.

20

A website is planned to have work schemes and lesson plans for all modules, interactive flash movies demonstrating key scientific ideas, downloadable student worksheets, links to other useful resources, sample questions and exemplary portfolio material, self-tests and tips from teachers who have taught the course. Students will be able to use the site as a self-study package from home or school and can provide data to teachers for use in whole class teaching. Training day evaluations were very positive about the online science resource.

Impact**21**

The depth of training and development that has taken place in 2002/03 would not have happened if funding had not been secured. Individual evaluations have been good, and feedback from school and management teams has rated the programme highly. Besides supporting the bonding and development of teamwork, the programme has encouraged sharing and collaboration. Its reputation has encouraged two more schools to join the partnership in 2003/04.

Next steps**22**

Plans have been made already for a training programme for Year 2 of the cohort. Requests have been made for training to cover the following:

- explanation of vocational qualifications and career/training progression routes;
- school key stages (for college staff);
- teaching and learning styles questionnaires
- behaviour management (for college staff); and
- LEA Curriculum Advisors' Network (LEACAN) training on the work-related toolkit.

Learning points

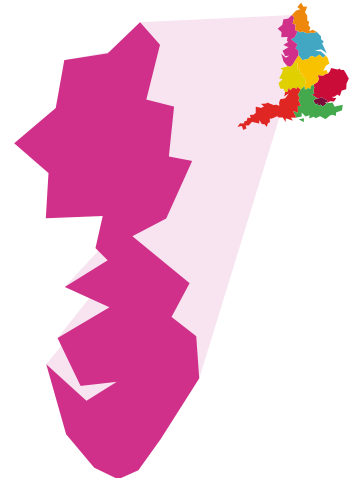
- 'Schools and colleges need a conceptual framework for planning, managing and keeping under review their programme of work-related learning – this framework will have many dimensions: one will be a development plan which includes specific reference to staff development and training. These are important elements when new initiatives in the curriculum are being introduced.'
- 'Collaboration between schools and colleges can bring about economies of scale in terms of cost and better programmes through the sharing of expertise and experiences – the programme needs to be flexible and manageable, but there should be opportunities to visit other institutions and employers in the work place.'
- 'When preparing a staff training and development programme, it is important to audit what is already happening and what is needed; plan carefully to meet those needs; communicate well when implementing; and evaluate what happened, in order to begin the process again for the following year.'

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3 Lancashire

The Increased Flexibility Programme and Preparing for Work Experience



Searchable themes

Classification	Resource development
Local LSC	Lancashire
Lead partner	Not applicable
Region	North-West
Type of institution	Schools, employers
Subject	All
Qualification	GCSE
Source	East Lancashire EBP
Theme	Work experience, links with employers
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

23

Introducing IFPs and courses leading to new GCSEs brought fresh challenges to the teachers and organisations delegated with the task of supporting their introduction and delivery. One such challenge is work experience, which is an important element of vocational GCSE courses. Young people should have opportunities to have out-of-school experiences with training providers and local employers. East Lancashire EBP regarded the new courses as an ideal opportunity to enhance work experience through the preparation of subject-specific resources.

Background and context

24

In East Lancashire in 2002/03, 7,000 students were provided with a two-week period of work experience. Across the same area, around 1,300 students in Year 11 and 2,400 students in Year 10 were following GCSE courses in vocational subjects, and many others were following work-related subjects. Making connections between the curriculum and work placements required considerable discussion, planning, preparation and coordination by practitioners in the classroom and work experience organisers in the county.

What happened?

25

Under the direction of Lancashire LEA's adviser for vocational education and Lancashire EBP, school-based work experience coordinators from across the county were invited to discuss work experience in light of the new GCSEs and to give direction on the new resources or services that might be needed.

26

It was agreed generally that two-week work experience placements could be developed into an excellent learning event for the students of the new GCSE courses. However, this would imply improved recruitment and training of employers, tightly-controlled matching of students to appropriate placements, careful preparation of students in school, improved interview preparation and interview

experience for both students and employers. Also, it was agreed that there should be more careful integration of work experience into the students' curriculum and a fuller specification of requirements for students to collect evidence of achievement during their two-week block placement.

27

In addition, specific, short-term placements – for example, one afternoon a week over six weeks – could provide additional subject-specific evidence and learning to support some of the GCSEs. It was thought that assignments could be devised with employers or training providers in order to enable students to experience a 'work placement', by being engaged over a period of time on work-related projects. Employers could be involved in task-setting, receiving feedback and providing subject knowledge within the development of the programme. This kind of involvement was agreed to be a valuable strategy to motivate students, as well as an opportunity for other vocational learning.

Impact

28

It was clear that it would not be possible to provide subject-specific placements to all students taking GCSEs in vocational subjects. This was due to restrictions and limitations on placements, or that the student might not want to do a placement in the area of their GCSE in vocational subjects.

29

Teachers split into subject-specific groups and worked over a one-month period to produce resources for each of the new GCSEs. Each group prepared a resource that, while being generic in one sense, was also subject-specific, and each individual prepared a resource around an agreed area of the subject specifications following agreed formats. The work prepared was placed in subject-specific files and placed on an open website ([www.cleo.net.uk/Cleocommunities/14-19GCSEs\(VocationalSubjects\)/Files](http://www.cleo.net.uk/Cleocommunities/14-19GCSEs(VocationalSubjects)/Files)).

30

Students engaged in almost any work-related environment will be able to gather evidence of how ICT is used within the company now. Students studying health and social care can consider the life changes that they experience in going on work experience, and the ways in which they anticipate those life changes will have an impact on them when they leave school. Health and safety will be an issue in science and other subjects.

Next steps

31

East Lancashire EBP is working with employers, teachers, tutors and students (where funding is available) to:

- engage more employers;
- improve the recruitment process for students going on work experience placements;
- improve the interview process;
- improve the preparation of students and the quality of their experiences on placement;
- improve the knowledge, understanding and skills that students bring to the placement and enhance them during placement;
- improve the feedback that students can give to other students following their work experience; and
- integrate their experiences with the curriculum.

Learning points

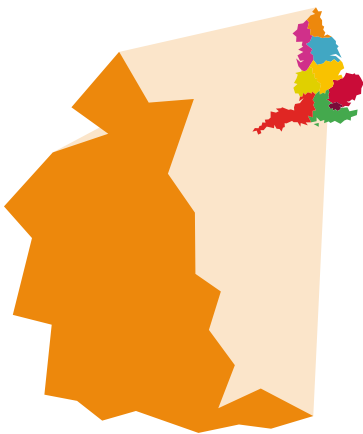
- 'Work experience is often a student's first direct experience of the workplace – It should be well planned, prepared and supported.'
- 'Teachers and work experience organisers need to work together to plan new programmes for students. They should have opportunities to meet as a group.'
- 'New courses require new resource materials – additional funding can enable this to happen.'
- 'Groups of teachers working together in a coordinated way will motivate one another, as well as benefit from division of labour and sharing of resources.'

- 'Employers can be involved in the setting of tasks for students on work experience and the preparation of resources.'
- 'Work placements provide opportunities to accredit students' learning.'
- 'A well-planned work experience programme should be part of pupils' progressive experience of, and learning about, the world of work.'

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4 Middlesbrough Collaborative GCSE Engineering Project



Searchable themes

Classification	Resource development
Local LSC	Tees Valley
Partnership	School and college funded by local LSC
Region	North-East
Type of institution	School, FE college
Subject	Engineering, design and technology
Qualification	Applied GCSE Engineering (double award)
Source	LSC Tees Valley
Theme	Funding, equipment, curriculum development, collaboration
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

32
Planning and delivering new courses and programmes of work requires funding to provide materials and equipment. Practical subjects such as engineering, which adopt a hands-on, problem-solving approach, require significant financial input to purchase what is required if the necessary cannot be loaned. Looking for new sources of funding can be a waste of valuable teacher tutor time and commitment. External organisations can help by delivering extra resources when possible.

Background and context

33
In the past, engineering has not been always a popular subject for pre-16 students and there have been many attempts to make the course more interesting and hands-on. One such programme was begun in September 2002 between Hallgarth School and Middlesbrough College, with the objective of increasing student interest and achievement in GCSE Engineering. The original concept was for students to be offered an opportunity to take part in an exciting but realistic design project.

What happened?

34
The focus of the project was the design and testing of rockets and dragster cars. Students worked on their projects in both school and the local FE college. The school staff had expertise in design and the college staff had expertise in modern technology – an ideal partnership.

35
The students gained experience of using different Computer Aided Design (CAD) packages to produce work for their portfolios. Two industrial packages, AutoCAD and Prodesk, gave the pupils experience of full engineering software. There were visits to several companies to compare a range of methods, from the established to state-of-the-art.

36

Included in the first year of the course were such topics as aerodynamics, cams and levers, drawing standards and injection moulding – all of which are identified in the student's portfolio.

37

The research and building of rockets was one of the big projects for the year. The students researched and built them and evaluated performance by firing them from a rocket launcher. The highest one reached well over 160 metres and the longest flight recorded was 21 seconds. The students enjoyed the project immensely.

38

All the designs for the dragster cars were produced on 3D software. The students machined the design using a 3D computer and tested it in a wind tunnel for drag. The car was then spray-painted and finished. Final testing took place on an 80-foot track. Successful car designs were entered for the national Jaguar F1 Challenge competition.

39

The LSC funded the course resources through IFP. This enabled the purchase of such things as a computer-controlled router, video conferencing, spray-paint booth, dragster race track, smoke tunnel, wind tunnel, rocket launcher and all the software to produce the rockets and dragster cars.

Impact**40**

Students were asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of the first year, giving feedback on the course. Comments were generally positive with many enthusiastic reports of their work so far. The comment, 'Learning practical skills is great!', summed up the views that were expressed.

41

Over the first year, student interest and motivation was retained. The course was fairly demanding, but 50 per cent of the pupils had 100 per cent attendance and 86 per cent had an attendance of over 80 per cent. The class is an even split between boys and girls and includes several minority ethnic students, providing equality of opportunity across the school. The students were given the

opportunity to show off their achievements by displaying their work at an exhibition in a local centre.

Next steps**42**

Another school is joining the programme and even more exciting designs for rockets and dragster cars are expected. Also expected are a large number of passes in GCSE in Engineering (double award). For some, Modern Apprenticeships may be the next step in their career progression route.

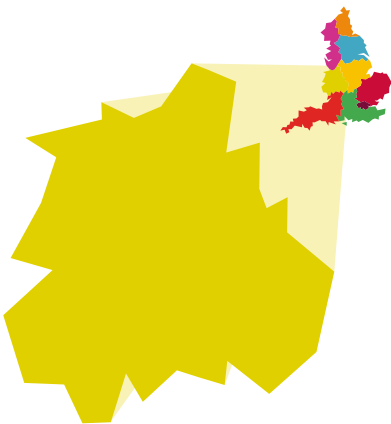
Learning points

- 'To do well in GCSE Engineering, students need to be stimulated and challenged through the provision of exciting opportunities and challenges.'
- 'Most students will respond to a more practical, innovative approach.'
- 'In this case study, the provision of funding to buy materials and equipment to support this approach proved to be very successful. Most of the equipment purchased is reusable and designed to last a long time.'
- 'Collaboration can lead to cost-effective sharing of resources and expertise.'

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5 West Midlands Staff Development and Dissemination Project



Searchable themes

Classification	Staff development
Local LSC	West Midlands
Partnership	West Midlands EBP group
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	EBP, schools
Subject	Health and social care, leisure and tourism, IT, business, art and design, science, manufacturing, engineering
Qualification	Applied GCSEs
Source	LSDA
Theme	Teacher placements, dissemination of good practice, learning resources
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

43
Networks form a proven method of sharing, transferring and developing good practice. Some vary in range and size with supporting subject-specific practitioners, while others support the development of collaborative or innovative working. The West Midlands project described in this case study did both.

44
Collaboration took place between schools and colleges, EBPs and regional companies and was supported by the LSDA in order to provide opportunities for teachers and tutors to visit local companies, develop resource materials and trial them with colleagues in their own and other local schools. The innovation aspect was to use CD and the Internet to disseminate their work.

Background and context

45
The DfES, through the Government Office West Midlands, recognised the need for teachers to update their knowledge of industry in order to prepare for the delivery of applied GCSEs. Funding was made available to the consortium of West Midlands EBPs to plan and support opportunities for a number of teacher placements, to develop awareness of different vocational contexts. Placement venues were linked with specific applied GCSE specifications.

What happened?

46
A number of one-day events were arranged at different company locations in the West Midlands, including Land Rover, Hothouse in Stoke on Trent, Stafford General Hospital, Fitness First, Cash's (UK) Ltd of Coventry, the Think Tank Museum in Birmingham and H&R

Tiles Ltd. Initially, all the vocational areas covered by the applied GCSEs were visited. A typical programme for the day included a tour of the location and talk by a company representative, followed by discussion on the ways in which this and similar workplaces could provide work-related learning opportunities for students. Teachers attended from all over the West Midlands, which allowed cross-fertilisation of ideas to take place.

47

After the one-day visits, further funding was made available for volunteer teachers to research and write case studies that were based on real-world practice. Companies contributed information on their own day-to-day practice that is not always available to schools. The teachers wrote a number of case studies for GCSE courses in applied art and design, applied business, health and social care, applied IT and leisure and tourism. There were no teacher volunteers to cover the missing vocational GCSE subjects.

48

For each case study, the teachers also wrote guidance and information on how to implement the work in the classroom. Some ideas referred to using the case study to brief visitors working with students, as a basis for role play, a starting point for an area of study or an assignment for homework. Paper copies of the resource materials were distributed to schools in the West Midlands for trialling and feedback.

49

The case studies were used to raise awareness of industry:

- in preparation for visits;
- instead of a visit;
- as a comparison to a local company or organisation; and
- to extend knowledge of organisations beyond the school's own locality.

Impact

50

Very positive feedback on the classroom value of the materials led to the funding of a CD and development of a West Midlands work-related learning website. In addition to the case studies and guidance on how they could be implemented, the CD gave guidance on finding, planning and monitoring extended work placements, along with a list of useful contacts in the region.

51

The quality of the website is good: the information is simply laid out, reasonably concise and easy to access and understand. There is much information for teachers to click onto, although it has to be said that teachers of science, engineering and manufacturing will not see their subject listed – perhaps this may form a future project. The LSDA has been requested to include the website and its information on its own database (at www.vocationallearning.org.uk).

Next steps

52

It is planned that the website will be completed, with the addition of more teacher placement-generated resource materials.

Learning points

- 'Generally, effective learning requires suitable and relevant learning resources on which learners can draw – increasingly, these are likely to include Internet searches and computer simulations.'
- 'Using the Internet to support learning objectives can provide insight into the work and practice of a company within a particular sector.'
- 'The expertise of adults in enterprise and industry can be an invaluable asset to vocational learning.'
- 'Young people are likely to feel encouraged where they can collaborate in solving problems, analysing information and presenting their findings.'
- 'Research shows that by the age of 14, the majority of students have a strong interest in vocational learning.'
- 'Some teachers have the expertise to produce learning material in an accessible and appealing format and at the right level, but they require help to make sense, initially, of what is happening in the workplace.'

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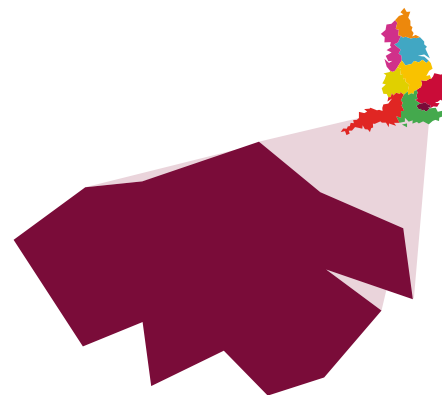
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6 Westminster Using Resource Materials in Different Contexts



Searchable themes

Classification	Resource development
Local LSC	London Central
Lead partner	Westminster LEA
Region	London
Type of institution	Local government, LEA
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	Westminster LEA
Theme	Classroom materials, Communication, selection of students, professional development
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

53

Resource materials that were produced to support orientation in the new GCSEs in vocational subjects have been used in different contexts by an LEA in central London. Westminster LEA has used them with students, teachers and tutors, training providers, employers and parents. They have been used on a one-to-one basis, in small groups and with large audiences, with participatory or non-participatory learning styles.

Background and context

54

Seven IFP partnerships were established in central London with funding from the local LSC. School/business links already existed, but schools and employers were not aware that the new programme included some different features to those which had been in the past. There was a need to educate employers, teachers and tutors, so meetings and training sessions were arranged to meet this need. A publication produced by the Centre for Education and Industry (CEI), *New Choices at Key Stage 4*, was used to provide materials to inform participants of the new course objectives, requirements and styles of delivery.

55

The publication contains materials which:

- explain the National Qualifications Framework;
- clarify what the new GCSEs are and how they support a vocational approach to learning;
- give an insight into the type of work involved in working towards the new GCSEs and styles of teaching and learning;
- offer opportunities for students to identify career needs and priorities;
- help students make plans and decisions about their future learning and work;
- can be used with students, teachers and tutors, training providers, employers and parents.

56

Each pack contains:

- a students' information handbook – information is given on the new choices at Key Stage 4, focusing on the new GCSEs in vocational subjects. It explains what subjects can be taken, the type of work involved and how they will be assessed. Summaries for each of the eight GCSE subjects cover purpose, assessment and what the next steps are in terms of further education, training and employment; and
- student subject leaflets – these give details on coursework and the knowledge and skills to be developed, as well as providing opportunities to sample some of the learning activities. They help students to plan and compare career pathways in different vocational areas. Students are able to complete an assessment to see whether the subject is the right choice for them.

What happened?

57

Westminster LEA used the materials in several different contexts. They provided information and activities for use on Year 9 taster days, and were used with employers to explain new areas – for example, what is a double award? They helped to indicate to employers how they could contribute to new courses. To teachers, they helped to explain the new courses and answered practical questions, such as how much of the timetable would be taken up, and how teachers might invite employers to contribute, whether in the workplace or school. Parents were given examples from the materials at career information and options events.

58

The materials were quick, easy and cheap to reproduce. They served multiple audiences and are unlikely to go out-of-date in the foreseeable future.

Impact

59

The programme support officers in Westminster were very pleased with the materials and their intended use. They believed that the new courses requirements were explained very well, with appropriate activities and information for different audiences. They plan to

continue to use the materials. The materials have also been used with success in other parts of the country.

Next steps

60

The DfES has distributed a free copy of New Choices at Key Stage 4 to all maintained secondary schools in England to support new courses at this key stage. Building on this publication, CEI has produced new materials to support GCSE teaching and learning in vocational subjects. The emphasis in these resources will be on the links with, and involvement of, training providers and employers in the new courses.

Learning points

- 'Work-related contexts can contribute effectively to teaching and learning materials.'
- 'Resource materials can provide active and stimulating experiences.'
- 'Resource materials can be adapted for use in different contexts and with different audiences.'
- 'New courses need to be explained to learners, teachers and other stakeholders in an appropriate and engaging way.'
- 'New courses require teacher support materials as well as student materials.'

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External Support, Learner Support and Mentoring

1 Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Ambassadors in Education



Searchable themes

Classification	Collaboration and support
Local LSC	Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (MKOB)
Partnership	Increased flexibility partnership and HE
Region	South-East
Type of institution	School, college, HE
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	LSC Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Theme	Mentoring, student development, partnership
Urban/rural/mixed	Rural

Area of good practice

1 There are a number of mentoring schemes but all can be described as using the particular talents, skills and resources of the mentor to support the particular needs and abilities of a student. In the case of an ambassador scheme, this usually involves the mentor undergoing a period of training.

2 Working with students from a local higher education institution has a positive effect on students who are participating in an IFP. Evidence indicates that it brings about improvements in attendance rates, reliability, motivation and aspiration. The HE students also receive benefits, for example, the development of interpersonal skills. In this initiative they were also remunerated for their efforts.

Background and context

3 An increased flexibility partnership for Aylesbury Vale was formed and led by Aylesbury College, serving the rural part of North Buckinghamshire and the Vale. Aylesbury College has a strong tradition of collaboration with both local and more distant schools and with Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College (BCUC). BCUC is situated in High Wycombe, but it is the nearest HE institution to Aylesbury.

4 The Increased Flexibility partnership sought innovative ways to deliver work-related opportunities for 14-16 year olds. BCUC was invited to join the partnership and bring a different perspective. While the inclusion of an HE institution in the Increased Flexibility partnership is quite unique in itself, it was not the intention that BCUC should have a passive role. Ideas were developed to give the university an active role in delivery.

5

The ambassador approach had been used successfully with upper school students on an occasional basis, but not with Key Stage 4 students and not as an integral part of a wider collaborative programme.

6

It was agreed that BCUC's role in the Increased Flexibility partnership would be to implement and manage the student ambassador programme with those 14-16 year-old students following college-delivered vocational and work-related programmes.

What happened?

7

Given the limited amount of lead time to set up IFPs, the student ambassador programme was included as a pilot with cohort 1. The university identified second-year students from BCUC who were willing to give up a regular amount of their own time, and who would benefit from interaction with the 14-16 year olds. They were selected to provide continuity in the second year of the IFP. Training was delivered by BCUC to equip them to work alongside lecturers as positive role models, supporting, guiding and mentoring the young people. It was agreed that the ambassadors would receive a payment to cover travel expenses and a small amount for their time from partnership funds.

8

Ambassadors were assigned to, and have remained with, the same cohort of Increased Flexibility students throughout the first year. In the early weeks of the IFP focus was on the support and guidance role, for example, helping young learners to get used to the college environment and display appropriate behaviour; this quickly expanded to that of mentor and learning support. The capacity of mentors to provide continuity, but to develop the kind of support that was given, has proved to be important.

9

The degree programmes being studied by the ambassadors do not necessarily match the vocational programmes being completed by the Increased Flexibility students. For example, one ambassador who supports the Increased Flexibility group of learners on an engineering programme is studying criminology. This in itself provides other

development opportunities for the ambassadors: for example, industry awareness, knowledge of health and safety issues, Key Skills development. In other examples it could be said that there is a closer match: for example, an ambassador studying social science works with Increased Flexibility students on the health and social care programme.

10

Currently there are not enough ambassadors to allow for one-to-one arrangements; they work with groups varying from eight to 15 students. However, their unfailing attendance each week at Aylesbury College has allowed them to develop firm relationships with all the students on a particular programme. Their very presence has had a major and positive effect in the workshop environment, offering students encouragement and a helping hand, and in the classroom, where their role has developed into learning support (and behaviour management where needed).

11

The relationships with the ambassadors have made students (and in turn, parents and teachers) aware of the opportunities on offer and the flexible progression routes that are available to them from these options. This has clearly raised aspirations and improved motivation.

12

Following the weekly sessions in college, ambassadors meet with their own tutor to debrief on progress, their own learning and to plan for further development. This session also provides an opportunity to collate feedback on the Increased Flexibility students. BCUC feedback is shared with schools through steering and operational group meetings and specific reports, for example, for an Ofsted survey.

13

A profile report form (whose format has been agreed with all participating schools) has been developed. It is used by college tutors to record student performance and is shared regularly with schools to inform school-based review. Teachers attend college sessions with students and gain first-hand information which informs the transfer of learning back to the school curriculum. Also, they have been able to take opportunities to address students' needs with regard to key and other skills on the vocational programmes. All these mechanisms contribute to overall improvement in student performance.

Impact**14**

Retention rates on the Friday afternoon IFP have exceeded 95 per cent. College coordinators meet groups on arrival and monitor continued attendance throughout the sessions. Learner progress to date is outstanding, with improvement being seen in school curriculum work in some cases.

15

Positive feedback mechanisms allow that knowledge and skills that is developed in college to be transferred back to curriculum work in school.

16

Increased Flexibility students have increased motivation and developed aspirations, including HE. Increased Flexibility students, teachers and parents have developed an awareness of the alternative routes to, and options in, HE. Barriers between FE and HE, and vocational and academic routes, are being broken down, with a more responsive approach to collaborative provision emerging.

17

Ambassadors have developed an understanding and respect for vocational routes to achievement, often commenting on the rigour of the courses and the talent and skills being nurtured. They have acquired new skills relating to learning and development provision and delivery, managing behaviour and attitude. Ambassadors working in this role have found the work extremely satisfying, helping to crystallise their own career ambitions, as well as providing a useful income while studying at HE level.

18

Student ambassador work has been formally recognised as a winner of the Team Teaching Award in the Buckinghamshire Lifelong Learning Partnership Awards.

Next steps**19**

Student ambassadors will continue to work with cohort 1, and additional ambassadors have been identified to increase the number available to support a second Increased Flexibility cohort.

20

New student ambassadors are being identified by peer recommendation – existing ambassadors are determined to maintain the high standards of commitment that they have developed.

21

It is also intended that feedback mechanisms will be refined.

Learning points

- 'Everyone needs to be clear about why the programme is needed and what its aims should be – this should be based on a needs assessment against clear criteria, which might include the following:
 - 1 attendance;
 - 2 time-keeping;
 - 3 attitude to school/college;
 - 4 coursework completion;
 - 5 confidence;
 - 6 self-esteem;
 - 7 career aspirations;
 - 8 motivation;
 - 9 communication skills;
 - 10 presentational skills;
 - 11 exam and course expectations; and
 - 12 specific-subject performance.'
- 'Recruitment policy and criteria will help to identify sources of potential mentors that are appropriate for the type of mentoring scheme which is being planned.'
- 'Potential mentors will need to be vetted.'
- 'A training programme for the mentors will help to ensure maximum effectiveness and contribute to their own personal development.'
- 'An induction programme for students is important, so they can understand what is involved in the mentoring process. This helps them to explore their expectations and identify opportunities and constraints.'
- 'Students should not over commit themselves – it is very easy to become carried away with initial enthusiasm, only to find later that commitments mean that initial expectations cannot be met.'
- 'Meeting without target-setting and review has limited benefit.'

Contact

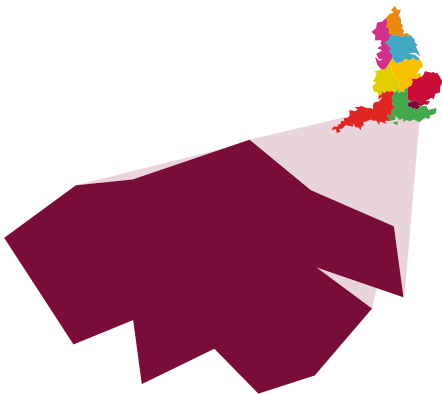
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2 North London Providing Additional Support at Barnet College



Searchable themes

Classification	Support and mentoring
Local LSC	North London
Lead partner	Barnet College
Region	London
Type of institution	College, schools
Subject	ICT, construction
Qualification	GCSE, NVQ
Source	Roger Hill
Theme	Professional development, funding, selection of students
Rural/urban/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

22
A college delivering the new GCSE in ICT identified the need for additional support in order to make the programme accessible for the students that they had recruited. The local LSC was able to allocate funds from its discretionary resources and an IT trainer was recruited who was able to work together with the college tutor, but has now progressed to becoming a tutor herself.

Background and context

23
Barnet College is a large post-16 provider in North London. It is the lead partner to five schools and has a Year 10 IFP cohort of 80 students, of whom 30 are taking applied ICT. The percentage of Barnet partnership IFP students that achieved Level 5 or above at Key Stage 3 is less than half of that achieved by all students in their schools, and around 10 per cent less than that achieved by the average IFP student in this local LSC.

24
Barnet College decided that the Applied GCSE in ICT was a more demanding programme than the GNVQ Part 1, but it was committed to delivering the new GCSE. As the first term progressed it became clear that the course was challenging the relatively large ICT group of 30 students, and it was doubtful that all students would be successful or even retained.

What happened?

25
Barnet College bid successfully to LSC North London for £6,000: this would fund the employment of additional staff to supplement and support teaching on the IFPs. As with other local LSCs, North London had received an additional £40,000 which was not paid directly to bidding partnerships, and it has been able to use these funds to meet needs and support developments across the several partnerships in its area.

26

An IT trainer with the right set of personal and technical skills was recruited, and she has supported every session since January 2003. This has meant that the large group could be split by ability into two groups of about 15 students. This additional support has been inexpensive, costing around £3,000 over the year. Barnet College has also been able to recruit another member of staff (who is currently completing a certificate of education) to act as technician and support tutor on the NVQ Construction programme.

Impact**27**

Additional staffing has been vital to student retention and supporting differentiated and appropriate delivery. In addition, the IT trainer has now been recruited to take over as tutor on this programme and will receive further training to support this role.

Next steps**28**

Barnet College has worked more closely with partner schools to recruit the second cohort of Increased Flexibility students, using Key Stage 3 teacher assessments as an indicator of baseline performance. Building on the experience of the first cohort, Barnet is now running two differentiated groups.

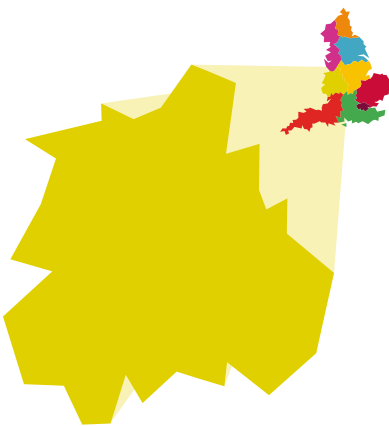
Learning points

- 'While it is possible to seek to select students who are appropriate for chosen IFPs, it is also possible to supplement and differentiate teacher input in order to meet the needs of students who are challenged.'
- 'Recruiting and supplying additional teacher input in an FE environment may be relatively easy and economic (in comparison with a school environment).'
- 'A support role can provide an excellent foundation for professional development for trainers and tutors who may go on to lead the delivery of IFPs – this may help to address capacity problems which are being encountered in some areas.'

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3 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Supporting Cross-County Coordination



Searchable themes

Classification	External support
Local LSC	Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Partnership	Schools, colleges, LEA
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	School, FE college
Subject	Various
Qualification	NVQ at Levels 1 and 2
Source	LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Theme	Collaboration, coordination, team approach, general and management
Urban/rural/mixed	Rural

Area of good practice

29

The Key Stage 4 curriculum provides opportunities for schools to focus more sharply on preparing pupils to manage their transition to further education, training or employment. Such opportunities can include NVQ experiences, where schools link up with FE colleges and WBL providers. Setting up new opportunities requires good organisation and management which have to be well resourced. Organisations outside of the school can be used to participate in the selection, briefing and support of students on IFPs and similar

projects. This case study shows how an existing brokerage service coordinated the IFP countywide, and improved life for schools, colleges and training providers.

Background and context

30

Since 1993, a project has operated in Worcestershire to coordinate the delivery of one- and two-day release programmes for Year 10 and 11 students onto courses giving NVQ experience. Limited funding had restricted opportunities to students who were not getting the best from the national curriculum. The project was successful, and gradually it was enlarged until all the high schools and some special schools in Worcestershire were participating. In 1999, management responsibility for the project passed from the then College Curriculum and Training Enterprise (CCTE) to the LEA so that it could be better integrated into provision at Key Stage 4. Further funding was given by the LEA and there was a further boost in 2002, with a successful application by the LEA to the LSC for co-financed ESF funding.

31

Most students on the project achieved a NVQ at Level 1 by the end of Year 11, with some achieving at Level 2. The courses were delivered by LSC-funded WBL providers: some were FE-based, some were private providers. Evaluations showed that the progression to

post-16 learning was high. A few students changed their vocational choice at 16 but this was seen as a positive aspect, as it is equally important for young people to know what they do not want to do.

32

This project became known as Project 19 and had up to 600 students a year taking part. When the IFP was announced in November 2001, the LSC realised that the experience of Project 19 provided a foundation on which to build. It was decided that the systems and procedures that were developed and used by Project 19 would be adopted for the new IFP. This was a criterion for all the Increased Flexibility proposals that were received from FE-based partnerships.

What happened?

33

After some initial confusion in schools (which was caused mainly by becoming used to new Increased Flexibility selection criteria and different funding arrangements for FE colleges), the programme was set up to operate much in the same way as defined by Project 19. The existing LEA NVQ brokerage service was invited to operate a countywide support service for the six Increased Flexibility partnerships, of which each would be led by a FE college. Significant benefits have been identified from using this service, including the following:

- establishment of good working relationships with WBL providers – by acting as the single point of communication with schools on WBL or NVQ matters, this obviates the need for WBL providers to attempt to deal with a large number of schools and vice versa;
- an existing database of employer contacts, which can be accessed by all partners in the programme;
- brokerage service staff are skilled at selecting school pupils for the NVQ route – so much so that one FE college has asked them to select for other elements of the IFP;
- tutors are not tied to teaching timetables and can respond flexibly to the logistical, personal and administrative demands of running a variety of programmes at different locations and times; and

- where a local FE college cannot deliver a particular NVQ, the brokerage service will identify an alternative by calling on a WBL provider – this increases the range of opportunities for participants and makes the programme more learner-led.

34

Additional staffing for the service is being paid from the discretionary element of the IFP. NVQ courses are expensive due to individualised programming, so some discretionary money is being used to pay for additional units. A weighted price for each unit has been negotiated with the network of WBL providers, including FE-based providers.

Impact

35

At the time of writing it was too early to evaluate this aspect of the programme, mainly because the work-based element takes place in Year 2. During Year 1, most students have followed college-based NVQ preparatory courses, providing the opportunity to acquire and demonstrate the underpinning knowledge to, and generic aspects of, the NVQ. Towards the end of the first year, and into the beginning of the second, participants have been matched with employers and WBL providers.

36

General enthusiasm shown by students has been high. Retention was about 75 per cent between September 2002 and July 2003. There have been some instances of disruption to, and distraction from, other subject areas. Schools remain committed to the programme, with many Increased Flexibility school coordinators reporting a positive response by their students to the more 'hands-on' style of learning for their students. Schools have welcomed the high level of student support that the LEA service has been able to provide.

Next steps

37

The role of the brokerage service will be fully evaluated when the first cohort completes the courses in summer 2004.

Learning points

- 'Make use of existing experience and expertise when establishing new projects and initiatives.'
- 'Selection of the "right" student is very important.'
- 'The opportunity to brief parents has proved beneficial, where it has been made available.'
- 'Collaboration and sharing of resources can bring economies of scale.'
- 'An external brokerage service reduced the demands on teachers and tutors in schools and colleges.'
- 'Pupils enjoyed the new "hands-on" learning style.'

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4 South-East Regional Learning and Skills Council Group Yearly Review Meeting



Searchable themes

Classification	External support, communication
Local LSC	All South-East offices
Partnership	Management group
Region	South-East
Type of institution	Government bodies and agencies
Subject	All
Qualification	All
Source	LSDA, increased flexibility support programme
Theme	Management, evaluation, collaboration
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

38

Reviewing progress is an important function of management. Opportunities need to be provided routinely to examine the quality of provision, and all stakeholders should participate and contribute. The best outcome is a review of progress that highlights strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for future improvement – possibly in the form of a revised action or business plan. Regional briefing events involving all IFP partners can bring about these desired outcomes.

Background and context

39

A number of organisations were invited to a regional briefing event held in the South-East in November 2002, organised primarily by local LSC officers. Support in organising the event was given also by the LSDA. The purpose of the meeting was to review the year's programme, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in key aspects of delivery and to identify ways in which the programme and its delivery could be improved.

40

The key aspects covered by the briefing event programme included:

- communications;
- recruitment of learners and participation rates;
- teaching and learning;
- partnerships and IFP management;
- finance and resources; and
- transport and logistics.

41

The six local LSCs involved in organising the event were:

- Berkshire;
- Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth;
- Kent and Medway;
- Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire;
- Surrey; and
- Sussex.

42

Invited delegates attended from:

- Increased Flexibility partnerships;
- Government Office South-East;
- LSDA;
- increased flexibility support programme (key coordinators);
- LEAs;
- EBPs;
- learning partnerships;
- schools consortium; and
- Connexions.

What happened?

43

The one-day event had a full programme covering many areas. The day commenced with LSDA and Increased Flexibility support programme national updates, before focusing on regional progress. There were opportunities for everyone to contribute and a question and answer panel took the platform for 30 minutes. In the afternoon, participants had the opportunity to attend two open forum sessions covering good practice in programme management and delivery. Refreshment and meal breaks were seen as opportunities for networking. Main points from the sessions were all recorded, as were recommendations for moving the programme on in the next year.

44

One example of what was produced was in the area of communications.

45

Regional and local communications: the group expressed very positive feedback. The network of email communications is proving very effective, providing a valuable channel for LSDA development work to reach all providers.

46

On a regional level, the group reported communications with both the LSC and LSDA as excellent, citing in particular the conduit role played by LSDA key coordinators.

47

The delegates offered some mixed reactions on the clarity of roles and communication channels within partnerships, EBPs and other stakeholders. The group raised the need to increase collaborative working across all stakeholders.

48

National communications: the group reported that nationally, there are some outstanding issues, with communications into schools raised as a particular issue. The role of the lead partner in data collection and evaluation is crucial and at times has lacked clarity.

Impact

49

An edited six-page formal report was produced and circulated to all participants. It was also made available to interested parties through the LSDA's Increased Flexibility support programme website. It is expected that the event will be repeated.

Next steps

50

Networking and sharing best practice have proved effective, and there are plans to develop and continue further collaborative working with all regional key stakeholders, including EBPs and Connexions.

51

The role of lead partners and their relationship with NFER needs to be clarified.

Learning points

- 'Good evaluation depends on being systematic – asking the right questions and collating and analysing the responses.'
- 'Information needs to be recorded as the activity proceeds.'
- 'Someone has to be responsible for recording and publishing acquired information and the agreed outcomes.'
- 'At best, networks will encourage openness and sharing of experience.'
- 'Communication should be both precise and sensitive.'

- 'Innovation will encourage wider networking and sharing because it stimulates both the appetite and the capacity to exchange experiences.'
- 'Learners and parents should be consulted on some key points – for example, teaching and learning styles.'

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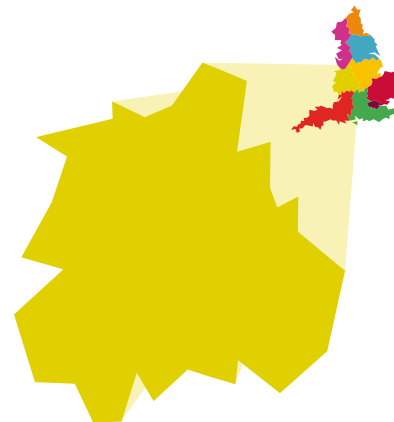
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Links with Employers

1 The Black Country The Carillion Scholarship Scheme



Searchable themes

Classification	Links with employers
Local LSC	The Black Country
Lead partner	Carillion
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	Business, school, NTO, FE college
Vocational areas	Construction trades
Qualification	NVQ, foundation certificate
Source	Carillion
Theme	General and management, Programme selection
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

1 This work is a partnership between education and industry. It is unusual in that it has been driven by industry and seeks to connect skills needs (at craft and professional levels) directly with the opportunity for schools to develop a more vocational curriculum. The aim of the scheme is to encourage 14-16 year olds to explore careers in the construction industry by developing the subject as an integral part of the school's curriculum. Unlike the other case studies in this collection, this scheme has not been developed or supported by an IFP. However, it does demonstrate that there are opportunities for learning between IFP and other contemporary initiatives.

2 The vocational programme which has been developed provides accredited learning through a combination of the Foundation Craft Award (a recognised qualification that has a natural progression to NVQ at Levels 1 and 2), and the GNVQ in Construction and the Built Environment. Built into the programme of study are a range of added-value activities to raise awareness and knowledge of the construction industry.

3 Led by Carillion, the partners are Coseley School and Sports College, CITB and Dudley College.

Background and context

4 Carillion is one of the UK's leading business and construction services companies with a turnover of £2 billion and around 18,000 employees. Its head office is in Wolverhampton, where it has been associated with the town for over 100 years. It has an impressive commitment to training at postgraduate, advanced Modern Apprenticeship and short course levels.

5 Coseley School became a specialist sports college in 2002. It has already taken a number of opportunities to enhance its vocational curriculum.

6

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) is the National Training Organisation (NTO) for the construction industry; it works to promote awareness of opportunities in construction and to develop training and skills in the industry. Dudley College has held a Beacon Award for construction since 1999. It has a long track record of supporting a range of construction education activities and training sessions for school-age, full-time and part-time students. The Construction Curriculum Centre at Dudley is jointly funded by the CITB and Dudley College.

What happened

7

In spring 2002, discussions between Carillion and Coseley School resulted in Carillion supporting the school's bid for sports college status. This led to further discussions about how the school and Carillion could work more closely together. Carillion won the Business in the Community Award 2003 as 'the UK's top company for corporate social responsibility', and were keen to build on this success. Senior managers from both organisations became involved and were committed to its development.

8

Further discussions between Carillion and Coseley School resulted in the agreement of a loose framework to support a range of construction activities. In May 2002, CITB was invited to help develop a more cohesive programme that would integrate with the school's curriculum and meet the industry's needs.

9

All partners agreed that there was a need to work towards an accredited qualification with value-added activities built in. To achieve this, it was necessary to adopt a twin-track approach: one that engaged the young people immediately, yet worked towards an accredited programme of study.

10

Initial engagement consisted of a series of briefings and interviews for Year 9 students and their parents. This would be of value to all Year 9 students, and would recruit a group of 15 'scholars' who were to form the first cohort for the new vocational programme, the Carillion Scholarship Scheme. From June 2002 to July 2003 a pilot

phase of the programme for the 15 scholars took place; this included a four-day roofing course at a CITB centre and industry challenge days that were led by the CITB.

11

At the same time, the school's senior management team (SMT) designated a working group to design a vocational programme that the young people could begin in September 2003. This involved identifying appropriate qualifications and professional development opportunities, and extending the partnership to ensure that the programme could be delivered properly.

12

The programme that emerged allocated a large portion of delivery to Dudley College. The college worked with Coseley School and CITB to develop a programme which offered dual certification through both the GNVQ in Construction and the Built Environment and the Foundation Certificate in Construction. Year 10 and Year 11 students both attend Dudley College's Construction Centre on Thursday afternoons, where they are taught separately. College delivery is supplemented with a number of CITB in-school 'project challenges' and with site and external visits, all of which the students do together.

13

An LSDA project for development of curriculum material to support the GNVQ was a good opportunity for professional development for teachers at the school. A 'Commitments' document has been developed, which records in detail the commitments and expectations of the partners in the scheme, and which will be reviewed annually. Some work placements have been set up at one of Carillion's manufacturing plants. Graduate recruits at Carillion are being encouraged to become mentors to the scholars, or to be trained to become 'young presenters', contributing to the vocational programme. The recruitment process has been refined in order to reduce the number of unsuccessful applicants for the programme and to try to recruit students who are representative of the whole ability range.

Impact**14**

Participating students have responded extremely well to the activities that have been offered.

15

Teachers who are not associated directly with the scheme have reported a general improvement in schoolwork and behaviour with respect to a majority of the scholars.

16

It is expected that the first cohort of students will achieve some units of the GNVQ Part 1, while the target has been set that 80 per cent of the second cohort are to achieve the Foundation Certificate in Construction and all students will gain some of the units from the GNVQ.

Next steps**17**

It is planned to ensure that Dudley College has ownership of the work as an equal partner.

18

Support will be sought from Advantage West Midlands and LSC The Black Country in order to sustain programme funding.

19

Work experience placements will be obtained within the head office environment and with other construction companies. More graduate young presenters will be identified, trained and deployed.

20

Additional professional development opportunities for the partners will be considered, along with opportunities to broaden the range of added value construction activities to support the programme.

21

The partnership will keep driving home the message about the breadth and rich diversity of job opportunities within the construction sector. For example, a Year 9 workshop is planned in order to encourage girls and minority ethnic groups to see and seize

the opportunities that do exist, and to communicate the breadth of opportunities that are available in 'back office' support teams.

Learning points

- 'A school-business link can lead to the development of a vocational programme which addresses the needs of learners and employers.'
- 'Partners may need to negotiate a written agreement of their commitments and expectations.'
- 'Where a school and a business want to develop such a programme, they may be able to draw upon the support of a number of agencies and partners (local colleges, LSDA, NTOs) in order to implement their vision.'
- 'It remains a challenge to encourage greater numbers of non-traditional groups to look at construction as a potential career route – however, an extended partnership between a school and a particular construction business may prove to be an effective strategy to meet this challenge.'
- 'Careers advice will be needed at entry and throughout such a vocational programme to support the choices of young people who wish to progress.'
- 'There is a need to monitor and evaluate the performance, attitudes, retention and progression of participants.'
- 'As the course progresses the steering group will need to look at whether and how the additional activities add value.'
- 'Staff who are associated with the scheme must have sufficient time allocated in their increasingly busy work schedules to contribute effectively to new programmes.'

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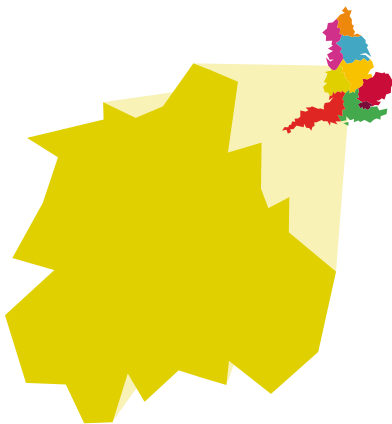
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2 West Midlands Premier Automotive Group



Searchable themes

Classification	Links with employers
Local LSC	Coventry and Warwickshire
Partnership	Not applicable
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	Business
Subject	Business, engineering, manufacturing
Qualification	Applied GCSE
Source	Premier Automotive Group
Theme	Employer initiative, resource development, careers choice
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

22

An employer-driven initiative which gained additional funding directly from the LSC, through which employers and schools are developing a framework and resources to support the delivery of several Applied GCSEs in Business, Engineering and Manufacturing.

23

The pilot phase of the project began in January 2003. It is now in a regional pilot phase and is expected to be rolled out nationally in autumn 2004.

Background and context

24

The Premier Automotive Group (PAG) is a consortium of motor vehicle manufacturers consisting of Aston Martin, Jaguar, Land Rover and Volvo – all of which are part of the Ford Motor Company. Within PAG, the Land Rover technical academy, which delivers training services for Land Rover, has played a key role in developing this project. Nicholas Chamberlain Comprehensive School and Bilton High School have run pilots. The LSC has provided additional funds and LSC Coventry and Warwickshire chairs the steering group. Calex Consultancy Ltd. have carried out research, material production and project management. All of the above institutions, along with representatives from Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions, were represented on the steering group for this project.

25

The motor manufacturers were looking for a way to develop the appeal, effectiveness and targeting of their own training programmes. This programme developed from research into their own training provision concerning performance and the extent to which it matched young people's aspirations. This research also identified the need to support and inform the decision-making process of potential recruits to PAG training programmes. The launch of applied GCSEs and the IFP provided the qualifications and funding to bring about change in light of the research.

What happened?**26**

PAG chose a learning material-based model of support. It judged that there was potential for a national roll-out without being checked by an unsustainable demand upon the company's resources. The scheme also looks to provide a framework within which visits can be planned and shared out in order to avoid 'congestion'.

27

David Ingram of Calex has coordinated the writing of learning materials to support Unit 2 of the Applied GCSE in Business. These are available in hardcopy form and have been piloted in schools. In addition, Calex has produced a website (www.calexuk.com/lsc/index.htm), which includes student and teacher support materials, online booking for visits and news about the project.

28

Calex is currently preparing learning resources to support each of the units in the Applied GCSEs in Engineering and Manufacturing as well as the other two units in Business.

29

In order to improve communications, PAG have provided an administrative officer who provides a one-stop shop for all enquiries, bookings for visits and so on.

30

Visits are much valued by schools and employers. The employers have sent representatives to Year 9 option evenings, students have visited the Solihull factory and made presentations at the Land Rover technical academy. In addition, PAG has negotiated the participation of five of their local dealerships – these will offer visits to pilot schools regionally.

31

Schools are providing feedback on the presentation and accessibility of the learning materials and the practicalities of visits, communications and timetables.

Impact**32**

Teachers have commented on the motivational effect of engaging students with a particular company and, in particular, the effectiveness of visits. The learning materials are produced professionally and supplied with tasks and teacher guidance.

33

Students (and their parents) have been excited by the recognition and contact that the PAG has provided to their schoolwork. School managers have welcomed the pilot as supporting other general changes that they are making to widen the vocational offer and achieve specialist college status.

34

The Land Rover technical academy is pleased by the recognition and enthusiasm with which the programme has been greeted by educationalists, and encouraged by the broader endorsement that the project is receiving from the rest of their company, their dealership network and the motor industry in general.

35

PAG is currently planning evaluation in order to examine the impact on student learning, employability and career choice, and on industry links more generally.

Next steps**36**

Feedback from the pilots will shape further material and web production. Five to six schools in the region will pilot further units in autumn 2003.

37

PAG is looking to draw its other dealerships and approved suppliers into the project, so that visits can be offered nationally.

38

Visit programmes are being designed to ensure that visits tie into the needs of the curriculum and of the business concerned.

Learning points

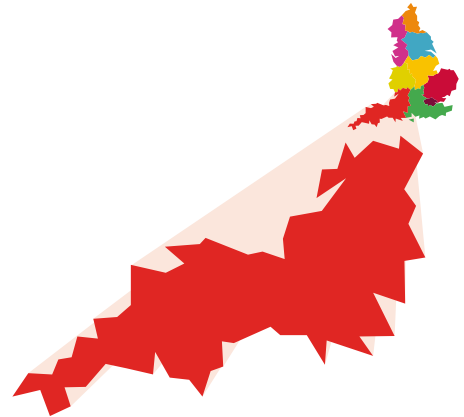
- 'Business involvement in applied GCSEs can motivate and engage teachers, students and employers, endorsing applied GCSEs and the development of vocational education in schools.'
- 'Training departments within companies can identify strongly with IFP – this addresses some of their development needs and offers them opportunities to contribute.'
- 'Through their networks of suppliers and distributors, large companies may be able to mobilise and coordinate a greater volume and range of industry involvement.'
- 'Some schools welcome the opportunity to participate in pilots and to access new resources, but they want to be able to influence the form and character of the resources that are being developed.'

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3 Cornwall Engineering a Partnership



Searchable themes

Classification	Links with employers
Local LSC	Devon and Cornwall
Lead partner	Cornwall College St Austell
Region	South-West
Type of institution	FE college, school, EBP, international mining company
Subject	Engineering
Qualification	GCSE
Source	Cornwall College St Austell
Theme	Work experience, delivery, professional development, evaluation
Urban/rural/mixed	Mixed

Area of good practice

39

This project is aiming to develop a transferable working model for the delivery of GCSE Engineering in a creative and exciting way, incorporating real work activity together with achievement of a nationally recognised qualification. It focuses on a collaboration between a school, FE institutions and an employer to determine the best learning experience for Key Stage 4 students. The model demonstrates how it is possible for different stakeholders in this kind of partnership to achieve their related but distinctive objectives from a jointly-provided programme.

Background and context

40

Since 2001 St Austell College has become part of the Cornwall College group with seven campuses across the county. The partnership between St Austell College and 11 local secondary schools provides a range of learning opportunities to over 600 students aged 14 years and above each year. Within this framework, the long-standing partnership between Penrice Community College (a comprehensive school) and Cornwall College St Austell was strengthened further by the involvement of Imerys, an international minerals company. Over the last 10 years many of the learning activities have focused on experience within an FE setting; employer involvement gave the means to broaden the experience and make it 'real'. Imerys have a commitment to support young people in the community and this project gives them an opportunity to realise that commitment. Key purposes underpinning the project are to:

- provide real work experience opportunities;
- engage young people with local industry;
- provide learning opportunities and resources using an identified plan and scheme of work;
- build an opportunity structure for young people at Key Stage 4; and
- increase access to genuine opportunities for progression beyond Key Stage 4 – for example, Modern Apprenticeships with local employers.

What happened?**41**

Colleagues from all organisations have met on several occasions, one of which was a network meeting organised by the EBP, to discuss how to plan the scheme of work. It was agreed that 2.5 hours a week would be allocated in college and a two-block period (2 x 50 minutes) in technology studies in school. Agreement was reached on which topics would be best delivered in college, taking into account the resources and experience of staff. It was intended that learners would experience this as an integrated approach to their GCSE, with all staff monitoring progress jointly.

42

A group of 15 Year 10 students began the GCSE programme in September 2002, and there are currently 11 students working towards the award. Three leavers cited the 'wrong choice' and 'too practical' as their reasons for giving up, and one thought he would prefer motor vehicle studies.

43

As this was a new qualification, the number of places was limited. Penrice Community College undertook selection of candidates on the basis of achievement at Key Stage 3. Programme delivery is shared equally between St Austell College and Penrice Community College. Delivering presentations training – as part of the design unit requirements – is organised through the EBP.

44

Imerys has agreed to provide work placements for the students as part of their GCSE course and has committed to providing such places annually. They have been designed to include time in each of the six main functional areas of the company, and will lead to individual project building on the learning which came from the placement. In July 2003 two teachers from the school and college undertook a five-day professional placement at Imerys, which will inform the planning of the second year of the programme.

Impact**45**

Stakeholder responses have been collected to evaluate the impact of the programme.

Of particular interest was the visit to Imerys and the chance to look at a real working environment. I enjoy the practical work we do in school and then feel we have the best of both worlds by being able to go to the college and experience learning in a different, more adult environment. I am especially looking forward to the six-day work placements provided by the college and Imerys and feel that I will benefit greatly from this experience, and at the same time improve my knowledge and understanding of local industry.

Miles Collings, student at Penrice Community College

Students and staff from Penrice Community College are delighted to have the opportunity to participate in such an innovative project with St Austell College and Imerys, enabling us to focus on effective collaboration between school, FE and a major local employer. At the same time it enables our students to undertake one of the new GCSE courses in vocational subjects, which otherwise would not have been possible. Already we have noticed that our students are benefiting from the numerous learning opportunities and resources available in the context of a local industrial setting, and as a result are fully motivated and engaged in the GCSE Engineering course. Members of our staff are also benefiting from shared training opportunities and have the opportunity to increase their skills and understanding of industry further by taking part in work shadowing programmes. We look forward to an additional cohort of 15 students taking part in this GCSE double award next September, allowing them to experience real work activity and at the same time enabling them to work for a nationally recognised and most worthwhile qualification.

Nigel Machin, Deputy Head Teacher and Language College Director, Penrice Community College

Cornwall Education Business Partnership is pleased to have the opportunity to work in partnership with the college and its partner schools in the delivery of vocational programmes to school students. Effective working relationships have resulted in some pioneering work with young people in the delivery of additional qualifications for Key Stage 4 students, including employer

involvement. The EBP supports the development and delivery of teacher training, which brings together college staff and teachers in schools to share good practice and support the teaching of new GCSE courses. The development of innovative approaches to teaching and work-related learning for young people and the development of skills and personal effectiveness, particularly in vocational areas, are at the heart of our work, and our partnership with the college has allowed us to further this aim.

Helen Field, Cornwall EBP

Imerys is very pleased to be involved in this innovative learning project. We look forward to real benefits from this project arising in a number of areas. Firstly, we welcome the opportunity to communicate directly with young people about Imerys' work activities and the many, and varied, opportunities that there are within the company. We also look forward to their feedback and perspective on our company. In making this early contact with potential future employees we hope we can encourage and support their development in the world of work. We believe also that working in such a partnership with education and training should enable us to influence strategies to tackle local skills shortages.

We believe the collaboration between Imerys staff and the students, school and college staff will benefit us all. It will encourage new perspectives, the sharing of effective practice and the development of improved training and educational activities. Local awareness of Imerys' ambitions for the future within central Cornwall will be raised by this contact with the students, their teachers and the further education college. This project is aligned with the Imerys goal of sustaining an exciting, profitable, environmentally-aware business with the active support and full participation of all members of our local communities.

**David Barnes, UK Kaolin Operations Manager,
Imerys Paper Europe**

Next steps

46

Imerys has monitored closely the work placements and plans to 'retune' the time allocations in response to feedback. The success of this particular programme is informing the development of further vocational programmes offered by St Austell College with its 11 partner schools.

Learning points

- 'Identify a named person to assume overall responsibility for the smooth running of the programme from the college perspective – This role includes:
 - 1 acting as the point of contact for partner schools, students and parents;
 - 2 overseeing of the curriculum and pastoral programme;
 - 3 organisation of regular meetings between partners for review and development of the programme;
 - 4 identification of professional development opportunities for college and school staff; and
 - 5 monitoring and evaluation of the partnership arrangements and quality assurance of the programme.'
- 'Identify a senior member of staff to take responsibility for running the programme from an individual school's perspective.'
- 'Prepare a good induction programme for students and awareness amongst college staff of strategies for supporting learning in the 14-16 age group.'
- 'Agree structures for monitoring student achievement that are compatible with individual school reporting systems.'
- 'Allocate time for college and school staff to develop links, attend meetings and training, visit partner institutions and observe good practice in curriculum delivery at all levels.'
- 'Note the importance of clear policies for transport, health and safety and student attendance and behaviour.'
- 'Get involvement and support from key organisations, including the EBP, Connexions and learning partnership at both strategic and operational levels.'

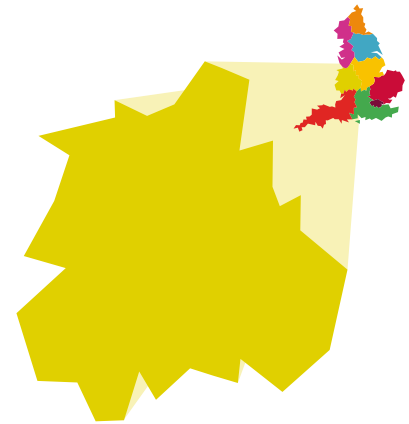
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4

Worcestershire Extended Work Placements and the Student Builder Project



Searchable themes

Classification	Links with employers
Local LSC	Worcestershire
Partnership	Not applicable
Region	West Midlands
Type of institution	LEA, FE college, housing association
Subject	Construction
Qualification	Foundation certificate (building craft occupations)
Source	Worcestershire LEA
Theme	Delivery, extended work placement, mentoring
Urban/rural/mixed	Not applicable

Area of good practice

47

Worcestershire LEA has brokered a programme that meets the needs of learners for a vocational programme in construction with a substantial work-based component. A local housing association has made this possible by helping to establish and sustain high-quality construction work placements.

Background and context

48

Building on their experience of Project 19 (an extensive programme providing vocational qualifications plus extended work experience for those who are not flourishing in full-time school education), Worcestershire LEA has worked as broker with various partners to develop its IFP. Its target clientele are students who have an interest in a particular vocational area and who would benefit from alternative learning styles – in particular, practical activity in a working environment. Across Worcestershire there are six IFPs based around four colleges, involving 30 schools. In Worcester and Malvern district the IFP is offered in partnership with Worcester Technology College across four vocational areas: hospitality and catering, construction, childcare and hairdressing. The numbers of students involved are relatively modest: Hospitality and catering 3; Construction 12; Childcare 12; and Hairdressing 12.

49

Health and safety regulations, combined with the structure and subcontracting practice of the construction industry, have conspired to make it difficult to find good quality construction placements for students. A special programme has been developed to overcome this problem for some students on construction programmes.

What happened?

50

In order to provide appropriate work placements for students taking the Foundation Certificate in Building Craft Occupations, Worcestershire LEA has developed a customised construction work experience programme for its Project 19 students. The LEA has entered into partnership with the Nexus Housing Association (NHA), which is part of the West Mercia Housing Group. Initially, with support from the Worcester Chamber of Commerce and in partnership with Worcester College of Technology and the CITB, NHA offers a programme of extended work placements with a group of six small construction companies who are contracted to carry out maintenance work for them.

51

The placements run from May in Year 10 through to March in Year 11. Students work one day a week for two consecutive weeks on their placement; for the next two weeks they attend Worcester College of Technology. In this way, six contractors can provide 12 placements, and the students rotate between three different contractors over the course of the year, gaining the full range of work experience.

52

The role of the college is to plan each student's learning and assessment, to collect evidence and carry out assessment in the workplace and at college.

53

Funds for the programme have been provided by NHA, Advantage West Midlands and by the local LSC. Worcestershire LEA provides mentoring for each student and allocates the students to the contractors.

54

NHA uses its good offices with its contractors to persuade them to take on the students. While selection is not limited to students who live in the housing association's properties, it is a requirement that they attend schools whose catchment area includes such properties. NHA sees the programme as an extension of its own commitment to working with its communities.

55

The LEA allocates a link officer to each IFP learner, who helps to match and induce each student to a placement and then provides mentoring and support throughout their IFP.

56

The cost of the school builder project in the first year was around £1,000 for each student, falling to about £500 for each student in the second year.

Impact

57

Although opportunities for employment are limited with the companies providing placements, the scheme has been highly successful in terms of progression: five out of six pupils in the first year were offered employment with local construction companies.

58

The fact that the placements involve maintenance work rather than new-build makes the work placements less hazardous for young people. All of the providers are united in a scheme centred on one housing association, and this has led to the retention of good placements and an accumulation and sharing of experience and trust. For example, Worcestershire LEA was able to organise systematic and appropriate criminal record bureau checks for all of the firms involved.

Next steps

59

The involvement of housing associations in the provision of placements has already been replicated with two other housing associations in the Midlands. Worcestershire LEA is in discussion with the rest of the city council about the generation of further long-term vocational work experience placements with the subcontractors that maintain council housing.

60

NHS has expanded its provision – it is now providing a total of 24 placements for Year 10 and Year 11 students.

Learning points

- 'Large employers with a commitment to serving their community may be willing to use their good offices and their influence on their supply chain to gain and retain good quality work placements.'
- 'A relatively small number of placements can be shared between a number of students, providing them with the opportunity to access a variety of experienced and well-supported work supervisors.'
- 'Where vocational programmes are being generated by a broker rather than a training provider, there may be a greater emphasis on providing a mixture of college-based and WBL, and more flexibility in negotiating customised provision.'
- 'WBL is likely to demand greater independence for the learner, who may benefit from additional mentoring.'

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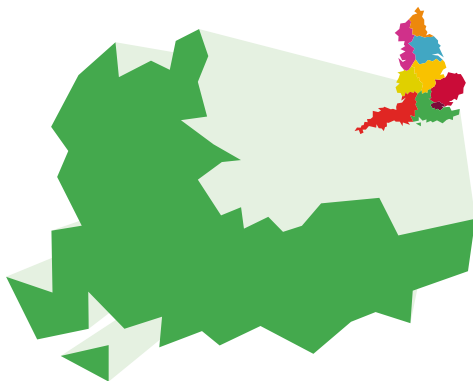
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Evaluation

1 Bracknell and Wokingham Student Course Evaluation



Searchable themes

Classification	Evaluation
Local LSC	Berkshire
Partnership	College departments
Region	South-East
Type of institution	Tertiary college
Subject	Various
Qualification	Entry level
Source	Bracknell and Wokingham College
Theme	Communication, support and mentoring
Urban/rural/mixed	Rural

Area of good practice

1 When introducing new projects and initiatives, processes have to be built in that provide formative and summative evaluation. All participants and stakeholders should be consulted, especially the students themselves. The evaluation mechanisms should be established early, so that courses can be altered to meet new requirements or address aspects of the course that are not working.

Background and context

- 2** When planning and preparing the new IFP, the course team at Bracknell and Wokingham College decided that it was important to have an evaluation process built into the programme. This would enable the team to check that what was being delivered by the course was appropriate for the students.
- 3** The students were following the IFP in motor vehicle studies, business administration, childcare and electronics and welding. Most of the students were taking vocational qualifications at Entry Level.
- 4** The students' responses contributed to reviews of the teaching and learning styles that had been used, course materials and delivery and suitability of the content. Early feedback on possible improvements and modifications to the programme was anticipated.
- 5** Formative evaluation assists the current planning, content and direction of a course. Summative evaluation finds out what students have learned from their course. This may require baseline assessment at the commencement of the course.

6

Evaluation has three stages:

- monitoring – collecting and recording the information;
- evaluating – drawing conclusions; and
- reviewing – reporting the findings and taking action (in the next cycle of planning).

What happened?

7

Students completed the evaluations within their teaching groups; they were supervised by the IFP coordinator and a learning support assistant, who assisted with any reading or writing difficulties. The evaluation format was mostly by way of tick boxes, with space for adding a comment if the student wished to give more information.

8

The questionnaire asked a variety of questions, including the following.

- Did the course meet your expectations?
- Was it what you wanted to do?
- How helpful was the tutor?
- Did your tutor provide you with helpful advice?
- Were you able to cope with the work and meet your deadline?
- In what ways can the course be improved? For you?
For other students?

9

The feedback was very positive; nothing negative was stated about the IFP. Praise was given to the course content and the teaching skills of the tutors. In particular, students liked the variety of the teaching methods that were used and the practical nature of the courses. Most students felt that the course had more than met their expectations.

10

The information was analysed under several categories and put together in a report for the whole course team. Each area was analysed in subject-specific categories as well as across the whole

programme. This report informed a course review meeting whose task was to prepare for the following year. The evaluation also formed part of a student self-assessment review which ran throughout the year. The action taken was to continue to develop the course along the same lines for Year 2, as the student satisfaction rate had been so high.

Impact

11

The evaluation was a good idea as it demonstrated to the students that their input was valued and that action would be taken on their feedback, if required. They knew from the second week of the course that they had a contribution to make. It was believed that this gave students some degree of ownership of the course and of their own learning. College staff were also reassured from the feedback that their efforts on the new course were successful.

Next steps

12

To continue with the evaluation process to ensure continuing feedback but to refine procedures to make them less time-consuming but more informative on performance and achievement.

Learning points

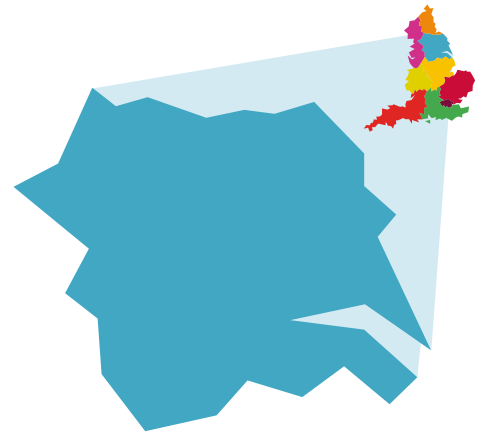
- 'Many students are not used to this kind of participation and careful, patient explanation is required in the first instance.'
- 'Care needs to be given to the type of questions that are used and the way in which the questionnaire is set out. (Be succinct and space them out well, and give plenty of room for responses).'
- 'All stakeholders and participants should be able to comment on the IFP and how it is being delivered, including parents and employers.'
- 'All contributions should be acknowledged.'
- 'A report summarising the main points should be available to all.'
- 'Build on the positives and work to remedy the negatives.'
- 'Students can give feedback on a course through a variety of ways – for example, a verbal presentation, drama, written statements, tick boxes.'

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2 Leeds Planning a New GCSE Course in Manufacturing



Searchable themes

Classification	Evaluation
Local LSC	West Yorkshire
Partnership	School, college
Region	Yorkshire and Humberside
Type of institution	School, college
Subject	Manufacturing, print, media
Qualification	GCSE
Source	Leeds College of Technology
Theme	Online learning, evaluation, collaboration, delivery
Urban/rural/mixed	Urban

Area of good practice

13

The IFP provided an opportunity for a partnership between a college and two schools to develop from a relatively loose, informal relationship to a more formal, structured partnership with written guidance and criteria for organising and managing a collaborative programme. These developments have been informed by the evaluation responses from staff and students.

Background and context

14

Vocational GCSEs were introduced as part of the IFP for 14-16 year olds. Leeds College of Technology agreed to work with two schools (both current partners) to deliver a vocational GCSE in Manufacturing (Print and Publishing) at the college's print media skills centre. In September 2002, 23 students from Roundhay and 18 students from Benton Park began studying for a GCSE in Manufacturing.

What happened?

15

The schools participated in general consultation and attendance of steering group meetings. The onus was on the college teams to deal with course management, development and delivery. School staff accompanied students on print courses, but had little involvement in delivery. Contact with the head, deputy head, coordinators and teachers had been regular, but evaluation found that the partnership would benefit from a more formal arrangement.

16

As part of their general development for working with schools, many members of the print team were involved in planning developments. In particular, two staff worked on course management, five teachers were involved in the delivery of two three-hour sessions to the two schools, and staff from the online learning team were assigned to

develop web-based materials. To support the work schemes created by the tutors, the online learning unit produced a virtual learning environment site, onto which tutors posted course notes and information.

17
After the project’s first funding year ended, it was observed that expenditure for staff to develop and teach on print courses was just under £17,000 and worked out at about £550 a student.

18
Students from both schools attended college one afternoon a week. A teacher from each school accompanied the group on transport provided by the college. At college, the students participated in a combination of practical (that is, project-based) and theoretical lessons that were delivered by college staff.

19
By the end of the year, Roundhay had an attendance rate of 90 per cent and a retention rate of 83 per cent. Benton Park had an attendance rate of 82 per cent and a retention rate of 67 per cent.

Impact

20
Evaluation was carried out in the form of a questionnaire targeting students, and a formal report produced by the print team, both based on the year’s activities. Evaluation brought to light the following points:

- on the whole, students’ and staff feedback had been positive – points that were highlighted for improvement were factored into the development plan for the second year;
- staff were happy that in the printing area, in contrast to the college’s normal gender/ethnic student profile, there was a more balanced gender and ethnic mix in the Roundhay and Benton Park students; and
- school staff noted a great improvement in the students’ maturity and that there was a strong sense of ‘distance travelled’ in the team’s end of year report.

21
Table 3 shows the students’ responses to the course:

Table 3: Student responses

	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly
I am happy with the course	4	21	1	–
I am happy with the balance of workshop and classroom activities	7	17	2	–
I feel that I learn a new skill each time I come to the college	3	14	9	–
I feel that the college staff are friendly and approachable	10	15	1	–
I am worried that I may be on the wrong course	1	–	14	11
I think this course is worth the effort of attending	8	18	–	–
I have a clear idea of how I will be tested at the end of the course	1	8	9	8
I feel welcome at the college	13	13	–	–

Next steps

- 22**
Results from the evaluation feedback highlighted the need to:
- hold further taster sessions – this was a practice which worked well last year and which the staff identified as being an important element in informed recruitment;

- establish a partnership forum for development and monitoring;
- plan developments in work placement and employer liaison;
- develop a more formal partnership agreement between schools and colleges, along the lines of a service level agreement; and
- develop further course material.

Learning points

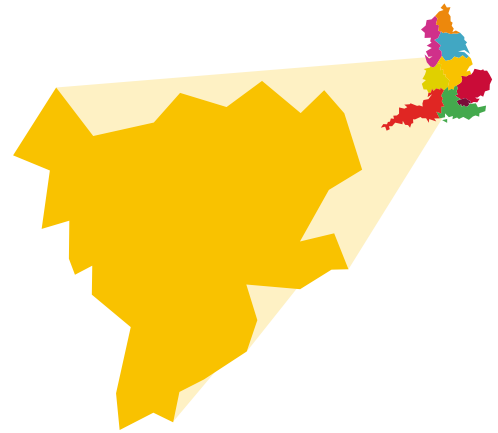
- 'The importance of planning with partners is of paramount importance.'
- 'Assess the cost effectiveness of the programme and whether it is achieving its targets.'
- 'Evaluation can help to support professional morale and commitment to innovation.'
- 'Evaluation can identify changes which could improve the effectiveness of the programme in future.'
- 'The Internet can be a valuable resource for supporting online learning and aiding communication.'

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3 Lincolnshire and Rutland Pupil Evaluation of 14-16 College Links



Searchable themes

Classification	Evaluation
Local LSC	Lincolnshire and Rutland
Partnership	Lincolnshire and Rutland School-College Partnership
Region	East Midlands
Type of institution	Schools, colleges, Connexions
Subject	All
Qualification	Applied GCSE, NVQ
Source	Lincolnshire and Rutland curriculum team
Theme	Evaluation, school-college links, Connexions, student feedback, recruitment
Urban/rural/mixed	Rural

Area of good practice

23

As a prerequisite for improving quality (and as a natural part of good practice in curriculum development), evaluation is an aid to the planning and revision of future learning experiences. The decision by the Lincolnshire and Rutland School-College Partnership to evaluate pupil experiences of initial selection of courses and organisation of links with local colleges, gave early feedback of the positives and negatives in order to inform planning for the next cohort during the following year.

Background and context

24

In Lincolnshire and Rutland, four colleges (Boston College, Stamford College, Grantham College and Lincoln College) bid to the LSC for funding for £50,000 each to offer vocational courses to pupils from local schools, beginning with a Year 10 cohort in 2002. All the colleges had existing links for courses in place and Boston College had established a keen market for these in the east of the county.

25

When it was known that the bid had been successful, a Schools-College Partnership group was set up in order to implement the funding and monitor and evaluate developments. As well as representatives from the four colleges, the group included representatives from the LSC, Connexions Service, and Lincolnshire and Rutland curriculum team. It was chaired by the 14-19 curriculum strategy manager of the Lincolnshire School Improvement Service.

26

It was decided that a survey of students should be undertaken to find out their views on the information and support that was made available to assist their decision-making when they were choosing whether to participate in IFP, as well as their selection of choices. It was thought that this information would help with the planning of IFP in the following year. It would also identify those students who were not happy with their courses and help to decide what remedial action to take.

What happened?**27**

The Connexions Service was asked to undertake an evaluation using their advisers to interview small groups (numbering three to six) of Year 10 pupils. This was carried out in September and early October, early in the new school year. A standard interview questionnaire was used. The results were fed back to the individual colleges, with the pupils' names removed, and the overall findings were submitted to the School-College Partnership group.

28

The evaluation was devised with the aim of obtaining data on the following key questions.

- Why did pupils choose to do a college course?
- How were pupils informed about the courses?
- Who helped pupils to make their decisions?
- What help did pupils have to make their decisions?
- Did pupils have to fill out an application form and/or go for an interview to get a place on the course?
- What were the pupils' impressions of the college taster day?
- How much had the pupils told their parents about the course?
- What were the current feelings and thoughts about the course and college after one month?
- What advice would pupils give to a current Year 9 pupil who has to make a choice about which college course to take next year?
- What improvements could be made to course arrangements?

29

A total of 58 pupils from 22 schools were interviewed. They were participating in a broad range of courses – hair and beauty, motor vehicle engineering, health and social care, engineering, construction, manufacturing, catering, leisure and tourism and the junior sports leader award. Levels varied from foundation to Level 1.

Impact**30**

To a limited extent, the evaluation methodology of a structured interview with pupils in small groups was successful in collecting information in a standard way from pupils about their thoughts and feelings. Some variations in questioning styles were apparent, as were variations in the extent of further probing of responses. Some very brief responses were recorded. Having analysed the responses, it is clear that other questions might have obtained more information.

31

The interviews suggested that the college courses had been very positively received by the pupils and had matched their expectations. The majority of pupils were interested in reflecting on the process of choosing courses and advising on improvements. The information that was imparted was first-hand and relevant, giving data from which course organisers were able to act. The overall opinion from the cohort was that college link courses should continue.

Next steps**32**

Some of the key recommendations from the evaluation were as follows:

- Year 9 pupils should undertake a self-assessment before choosing a course;
- pupils should explain on their application form why and how they will benefit from the course;
- more information on the content and expectations of the course would be valued;
- taster days could be extended to inform choices;
- past pupils could help to write course prospectuses; and
- resources and training were required to raise staff, pupil and parent awareness of opportunities in non-stereotyped roles.

Learning points

- 'Monitoring and evaluation of work-related learning and business links developments are important functions of management – they involve applying procedures for examining routinely the quality of provision as it is planned and delivered.'
- 'Evaluation is a process of making judgements about what has happened – it can be used to plan further learning experiences and deliver future stages of the same project or new projects.'
- 'Pupils (and others) in an evaluation process can be called on to:
 - 1 comment on the nature of their experiences;
 - 2 complete questionnaires and participate in interviews;
 - 3 identify areas of work that they enjoyed or found difficult;
 - 4 articulate what they felt they had learned; and
 - 5 contribute to a review of what has taken place.'

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4 Hampshire Ofsted at Sparsholt College



Searchable themes

Classification	Evaluation
Local LSC	Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth
Lead partner	Sparsholt College
Region	South-East
Type of institution	Specialist agricultural college
Subject	Various
Qualification	GCSE, NVQ
Source	Sparsholt College
Theme	General and management, Ofsted, inspection
Urban/rural/mixed	Rural

Area of good practice

33
A specialist agricultural college was given the opportunity to provide seven partner schools with a range of vocational programmes through IFP. The programme underwent Ofsted inspection in November 2002 and received a positive and constructive report. (The Ofsted inspection of Sparsholt College formed part of a general Ofsted review of IFPs which has not been published.)

Background and context

34
The partnership consists of seven local schools (with 60 pupils in total) based around Winchester and the surrounding area. Sparsholt College is one of the leading land-based colleges in England and is a rural campus situated four miles from Winchester. The courses offered under the IFP include the NVQ or equivalent in motor vehicle studies, horticulture, equine, performing engineering operations, agriculture, vocational GCSE engineering and animal care. All courses are delivered at the college by specialist staff and provide the opportunity for young people to have vocational training in a realistic working environment.

35
Although time was limited to set up the IFP, at Sparsholt it was felt that the 14-16 pupils should go through a similar recruitment and selection process to the full-time students. This consisted of adapted application forms (suitable for the academic level and age of the learner), gathering relevant information from the partner schools and an interview day. This was a useful process which began to paint a picture of the learners, giving them a chance to view the college and think seriously about choosing the 'alternative curriculum' option. Once pupils were placed on the right course, there was also the chance for their parents to come and see Sparsholt College and find out about the IFP – for example, explaining the courses and what they involved, transport, code of conduct and so on.

What happened?**36**

At the end of a long, busy period and much hard work for all the partners, the IFP was ready to go into full operation in September 2002. Then news was received that Ofsted had chosen Sparsholt College as one of the institutions that they would like to survey under the IFP. The survey was to monitor implementation of the IFP and included:

- curriculum breadth, balance and entitlement;
- increased curriculum flexibility and its effects for individual pupils, groups and schools;
- enrolment, induction, monitoring and communications;
- teaching and learning in vocational courses and general courses, including assessment;
- the role of vocational qualifications and work-related learning as preparation for later stages of learning;
- change in attainment in comparison with forecasts connected with participation in the IFP;
- management, coordination and leadership within local partnerships, including development work with employers and voluntary sector organisations; and
- the effects of locally and nationally-provided support and development programmes.

37

The visit was planned from four weeks after the news was received. Using the relevant information as provided above, a project file was prepared and outline details of the project were sent to the two inspectors who would be visiting Sparsholt College and two of its partner schools on 13 and 14 November 2002. With thorough management and documentation of the project right from the beginning, it was just a matter of gathering the information and arranging the details of the visit.

38

The visit included discussions with the project coordinator, vice principal, learning services manager, contacts at two of the partner schools, six 14-16 lesson observations and an informal lunch with some of the 14-16 students.

39

After two days, the Ofsted inspectors provided verbal feedback for the IFP at Sparsholt College. In general, this was very positive.

40

In a follow-up letter from Ofsted the following comments were made.

Key strengths:

- a very well-led partnership;
- very good support from the IFP coordinator;
- very good motivation, behaviour and attendance of pupils;
- thorough recruitment activities which led to the most appropriate pupils entering the IFP courses;
- very good planning of the programme to be offered – this included aspects such as coordinated timetabling and transport arrangements;
- effective communication with schools;
- good to very good teaching by full-time members of staff;
- schools support pupils effectively in the lessons that are missed as a result of their visits to college; and
- good guidance and support offered to pupils.

Areas to be considered in the future:

- aspects of the teaching and learning on the GCSE Engineering and motor vehicle courses;
- gender balance; and
- development of target-setting for pupils based on prior attainment.

Impact**41**

The overwhelmingly positive judgement of Ofsted made the intensive planning and implementation of the project seem worthwhile. In addition, it was rewarding to hear that the programme had received strong endorsement from pupils, for example, 'We feel we were lucky to get a place at Sparsholt', and 'We really enjoy the practical activities'. The Ofsted exercise highlighted the enthusiasm of the pupils and the staff teaching them at this point in time.

Next steps

42

As a result of the inspection the partnership is improving collaboration with school partners for teaching on the GCSE Engineering programme. It has extended the range of provision to attract larger numbers of females for the 2003 cohort, and is developing a common target-setting format for 14-16 students.

Learning points

- 'The Ofsted survey proved to be a really useful experience for the Sparsholt College IFP – it was useful to have the feedback from an external point of view and to know that the project was on the right track, early in the lifetime of the programme.'
- 'The partnership attributes its success to the following:
 - 1 a true partnership with all decisions made by the partnership;
 - 2 strong management from the start, involving college staff and all partners;
 - 3 the motivation and enthusiasm of the 14-16 students and the positive impact of this upon staff;
 - 4 keeping the project at a manageable size with discrete, focused groups; and
 - 5 14-16 year olds were very pleased to have the opportunity to attend Sparsholt College, a specialist institution with a strong local reputation and excellent resources – this response has proved to be a foundation for successful learning.'

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Notes

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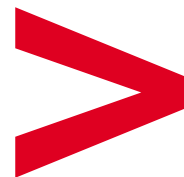


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